

Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity

Studies in Honour of
Henk Jan de Jonge

Edited by
Rieuwerd Buitenwerf,
Harm W. Hollander and
Johannes Tromp

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Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity

Supplements to Novum Testamentum

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PREFACE

In 2005, his final year as Dean of Leiden University's Faculty of Religious Studies (or Theology, as it was then named), Henk Jan de Jonge announced his early retirement from the Chair of New Testament Studies. The reason for this was not a decline of energy or enthusiasm for his profession as either administrator or scholar. On the contrary, it was an unbroken feeling of loyalty and responsibility for the institute to which he had given his best years (but which at the time found itself in budgetary dire straits), that brought him to this decision. The announcement came of a sudden, and would come into effect on relatively short term, so that it proved impossible to organize a volume of articles in his honour that would do justice to his merits, and present it to him at the occasion of his valedictory lesson. It was therefore decided by the undersigned that a Festschrift should be offered to him, but only at the moment when he would reach the age of statutory retirement, his 65th birthday on September 28th, 2007.

Henk Jan de Jonge studied Classics at Leiden University, and also followed courses in Theology. He drew the attention of Marinus de Jonge, then the New Testament Chairholder, and was invited to assist in the preparation of a critical edition of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. His role in this project was pivotal, as he managed to draw up a *stemma codicum* of that writing's manuscripts, that has gone unchallenged since then. He was appointed as lecturer for New Testament Studies at the University of Amsterdam, while preparing a dissertation on the subject of Erasmus' polemics with the Spanish philologist Stunica on the text of the New Testament. In 1986 he was called back to Leiden as lecturer, and also, since 1987, as *extraordinarius* for the History of New Testament Scholarship. He succeeded Marinus de Jonge on the New Testament chair in 1990.

In the following years he concentrated on his teaching, as well as on the supervision of numerous dissertations on the Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament. His own research resulted in a long list of publications on early Christianity, especially the emergence and development of central Christian tenets, such as vicarious death, reconciliation, and resurrection; and of the most important Christian ritual,

the commemorative meal on Sunday. In his spare time, he remained an arduous student of the history of scholarship, and of the Walloon (i.e., francophone) protestant church in the Netherlands.

Classics, pseudepigrapha, New Testament, Erasmus, modern church history... to honour a man with a Festschrift that satisfies all his wide-ranging interests would be impossible. Therefore, the editors of this Festschrift decided that they should restrict themselves to one of these, and they chose for the subject explicitly designated by Henk Jan's teaching commitment: the New Testament and the early Christian literature.

In his own work as a New Testament scholar, De Jonge has always stressed the necessity of ongoing research into those issues that are fundamental for a better understanding of Jesus, of the movement that issued from his actions as eschatological preacher, and of the ways in which the convictions of Jesus' followers were shaped and developed in oral and written tradition. Although no theologian by training, Henk Jan has been firmly convinced that the study of the New Testament should first of all serve the church's need for a solid, academic basis of its faith. In his personal point of view, Christian theology must be willing and able to answer to contemporary demands of intellectual respectability. His contribution to that ideal has been a uncompromisingly critical study of the earliest Christian history. This volume's authors pay homage to Henk Jan de Jonge by offering a sample of their scholarship in this disposition, in gratitude for the inspiration he has offered to them.

The list of contributors should have included William L. Peterson. He had planned to send in an article for this volume, but was prevented by fate to complete it. As he wrote to us less than a week before his untimely death, Bill's thoughts were with Henk Jan, and he requested that his cordial greetings be conveyed to him, in this Preface.

The editors.

WIE KOMMT ES ZUM BEKENNTNIS ZU JESUS?

Klaus Berger

Sich zu Jesus zu bekennen, ist an Titel gebunden, die man Jesus zuerteilt. Dazu gehört "Sohn Gottes" oder "Herr" oder auch "Messias/Christus." Es könnte jedoch sein, dass diese Titel Jesus nicht im Rahmen einer theologischen Systembildung zugeteilt werden, auch nicht als Abstraktionen, also als "Begriffe" philosophischer Art.

Viele ältere Texte weisen auf ganz andere Zusammenhänge. Dazu gehört auch der Gebrauch des Namens Jesu selbst, besonders im Zusammenhang der Taufe, denn der Name Jesus "Erlöser, Befreier" steht für den Wechsel des Besitzers; der ist nicht mehr der Satan, sondern nun Jesus/Gott (z.B. Apg. 26:18). Mit der Rolle des Namens Jesu beschäftigen wir uns in einem eigenen Abschnitt.

Hier geht es dagegen um die titularen Bekenntnisse, zum Beispiel "Herr" oder "Gottes Sohn." Nach meiner Auffassung haben diese ihren Ursprung in einem "pneumatologischen Dualismus."

Unter "pneumatologischem Dualismus" verstehe ich dieses: Die Welt der unsichtbaren Geister ist strikt zweigeteilt. Diese Zweiteilung ist die von Gott und Satan, von Gut und Böse, Licht und Finsternis, Ordnung und Chaos. Damit sind gleichzeitig zwei auf Erden rivalisierende Reiche gemeint, zwischen denen Kriegszustand herrscht. Die Entscheidung, ob einer zu dem einen oder anderen Reich gehört, wird in der Mission erkennbar. Die Truppe Gottes wird durch den Erzengel Michael angeführt. Hinter den Regierungen und Herrschern dieser Welt stehen die finsternen Mächte, Herrschaften und Gewalten. Wäre es anders, dann sähe diese Welt anders aus. Das Verhältnis beider Lager zueinander vollzieht sich als Kampf. In diesem Kampf kann Jesus kommandieren ("Raus hier...!") und Exorzismen ausüben. Es liegt daher ein Kampf der Macht Gottes gegen die Macht der Finsternis vor. Im Evangelium nach Markus berichten die ersten Kapitel hauptsächlich von Jesu Exorzismen, und verursacht ist diese Tätigkeit dadurch, dass Jesus nach Kap. 1 bei der Taufe den guten heiligen Geist empfangen hat, und in dieser Kraft kann er nun die unreinen oder bösen Geister austreiben und so Gottes Reich ausbreiten. Denn entweder gehört ein Mensch zu Gottes Reich, dann wohnt der Heilige Geist in ihn, oder er ist von Dämonen bewohnt. Mit diesem Dualismus ist eine eigentümliche Erkenntnis-

theorie verbunden, dergestalt nämlich, dass (nur) Geister einander klar wahrnehmen können, auch wenn es sich um Geister der Gegenseite handelt.

1. *Dualismus und Bekenntnis*

Auch der Name Jesu steht in einem pneumatologisch-dualistischen Streit. Denn er wird in beiden Fällen von einem Engel gegeben (Mt. 1:21; Lk. 1:31). Im Evangelium nach Markus wird Jesus im Zusammenhang mit der Herabkunft des heiligen Geistes auf ihn "Sohn Gottes" genannt. Hier wie auch sonst ist der Titel Sohn Gottes an den heiligen Geist gebunden.

Zum ersten mal findet sich das explizite Bekenntnis "Du bist der Sohn Gottes" im Munde von Dämonen in Mk. 3:11. Dieses wird m.E. ganz richtig so gedeutet, dass die unreinen Geister gewissermaßen Ihresgleichen auf der Gegenseite genau wahrnehmen können. Warum Jesus dieses Bekenntnis durch Schweigegebot unterbindet, wird noch zu klären sein. Doch an der Wahrheit dieses Bekenntnisses kann nach 1:11 gar kein Zweifel bestehen. Wichtig ist hier nur: Weil es sich um Geister handelt, können sie die Identität des heiligen Geistes in Jesus wahrnehmen und ihn daher folgerichtig als Sohn Gottes bekennen.

Das titulare Bekenntnis "Du bist der Heilige Gottes" hatten die unreinen Geist auch bereits in Mk. 1:24 abgelegt; hier entspricht dem heiligen Geist die Heiligkeit—und auf der anderen Seite die Unreinheit und Unheiligkeit der feindlichen Geister.

Aufgrund seines mangelhaften, das Leiden ausschließende Bekenntnisses wird Petrus von Jesus in Mk. 8:33 "Satan" genannt. Auch dieses setzt voraus: Der Bekenkende selbst gehört dem Bereich zu, ist von dem Bereich inspiriert, dem er Jesus zuordnet. Denn für Menschen gilt: Was auch immer sie bekennen, im Rahmen des pneumatischen Dualismus gehören sie entweder zu Gott oder zum Satan. Petrus hat durch seine Art des Bekenntnisses zu verstehen gegeben, auf welcher Seite er steht. Denn ein Messias ohne Leiden wäre eine Erfindung des Teufels. Auf jeden Fall gilt aber die Identität von Sein und Bekennen. Was ich bekennen kann, richtet sich nach dem, was ich selbst bin.

Die älteste in diesem Zusammenhang zu diskutierende Stelle ist sehr ergiebig: 1 Kor. 12:2b-3: "Gott redet durch seinen Geist in euch.

Deshalb ist es nicht gleichgültig, was ihr sagt. Wer von Gottes Geist erfüllt ist, wird kein 'Verflucht sei Jesus' über die Lippen bringen. Und wenn einer sagt 'Jesus ist der Herr,' dann kann das auch nur von Gottes Heiligem Geist her verstanden werden." Paulus meint: So wie jemand ist, so bekennt er auch. (Ähnlich ist übrigens die Grundvoraussetzung im Johannesevangelium und in 1 Johannes). Wenn einer von Gottes Geist erfüllt ist, dann kann er auch das rechte Bekenntnis sprechen. Dass es sich hier nicht um den "Sohn Gottes" handelt, sondern um den Herrn (Kyrios), liegt an der engen Verbindung von Herr und Geist bei Paulus. Vgl. dazu 2 Kor. 3:16-17 nach Berger/Nord:

In der Schrift heißt es aber bereits: "Wenn einer sich zum Herrn hinwendet und sich bekehrt, dann wird die Decke weggezogen." Mit "zum Herrn" ist dabei "zum Heiligen Geist" gemeint. Wo aber der Geist Gottes ist, da ist Freiheit von allem, was trennt, und damit ist von der Decke, die den freien Blick verhindert, bis hin zum Todesurteil alles aufgehoben.¹

Die Hinwendung zum Herrn bezieht sich im Alten Testament auf die Gottesbegegnung des Moses im Offenbarungszelt. Paulus deutet im Sinne der Bekehrung zu Christus.

Oft ist die Bekenntnissituation nicht gottesdienstlich, sondern politisch. Hier liegt vielleicht sogar der primäre "Sitz im Leben" des frühchristlichen Bekenntnisses zu Jesus. Auf jeden Fall wird auch dieses auf das Wirken des heiligen Geistes zurückgeführt: Nach Mk. 13:11 spricht der heilige Geist aus den Christen, wenn sie ihren Glauben bekennen vor Königen und Fürsten, und nach Lk. 12:11 wird Jesus den Jüngern für dieselbe Situation sagen: "Der heilige Geist wird euch lehren, was ihr zu sagen habt."

Auch die Sünde gegen den heiligen Geist nach Markus 3 ist deshalb so schlimm und unvergebbar, weil der böse Geist, den er Jesus anhängen will, offensichtlich in dem Sprecher dieser Mundsünde selbst wohnt. Denn auch hier gelten die Regeln des Geister-Dualismus: Wer statt der Wahrheit das Falsche bekennt, in dem wohnt der Teufel. Im Falle der Sünde gegen den heiligen Geist bedeutet das: Wer mit Worten verkündet, in Jesus wohne nicht der Geist Gottes, sondern der Geist Beelzebuls, auf den trifft letzteres schon deshalb

¹ *Das Neue Testament und frühchristliche Schriften*, übersetzt und kommentiert von K. Berger und Chr. Nord, Frankfurt am Main/Leipzig 2005, *ad loc.* Zur Stelle vgl. auch Ex. 34:34.

zu, weil es als falsche Behauptung nach dem Bumerang-Prinzip von Jesus abprallt und auf den irrenden Sprecher zurückfällt.

Besonders klar wird das Gemeinte in 1 Joh. 4:1-3:

Verlaßt euch nicht auf alles, was die Leute als Heiligen Geist ausgeben. Vielmehr prüft, ob es sich wirklich um Wirkungen von Gottes Geist handelt. Denn es gibt viele Falschpropheten in der Welt. Daß einer den Geist Gottes hat, könnt ihr daran erkennen, daß er bekennt, daß Jesus der Messias ist, der als Mensch unter uns war. Und jeder, der das nicht bekennt, hat nicht Gottes Geist, sondern in ihm wirkt der Antichrist, von dessen Kommen ihr gehört habt und der schon in der Welt ist.

Das titulare Bekenntnis zur Messianität Jesu ist nach diesem Text die Folge des Geistes Gottes, den der Glaubende erhalten hat. Wie zu erwarten, ist der Text antithetisch aufgebaut und spiegelt den pneumatologischen Dualismus klar wider. Für den Geistbesitz und die Unterscheidung der Geister gibt es daher klare Kriterien: Das rechte Bekenntnis und in der Folge davon die Einmütigkeit in der Gemeinde, die der Verfasser "Liebe" nennt.

In der Kirchengeschichte gibt es wichtige Nachwirkungen des Zusammenhangs von Dualismus und Bekenntnis. Die wichtigste ist die feierliche Absage an den Teufel beim Anlaß der Taufe. Denn die Taufe ist der Ort der Übergabe des Bekenntnisses an den Getauften und des ersten Bekenkens. In diesem Kontext heißt es im alten Ritual: "Widersagst du dem Satan?" / "Ich widersage"; "Und all seiner Pracht?" / "Ich widersage." Diese dualistische Ausrichtung der Taufe halte ich für wesentlich und für nicht auslaßbar. Denn hier kann deutlich werden, dass christliche Taufe nicht nur Anfang der Erziehung "zu anständigen Menschen" ist, sondern Abgrenzung mit Folgen.

Der hier vertretene Ansatz erleichtert auch einen Zugang zum Inspirationsbegriff, bezogen auf die Schrift. Denn das frühe Christentum ist der Meinung, die Bibel sei, so wie von der Kirche ausgewählt und abgegrenzt, vom heiligen Geist inspiriert. Hier liegt dieselbe Entsprechung zwischen Gläubigen und heiligem Text zugrunde wie in der Beziehung zwischen Gläubigem und Bekenntnis. Diese Entsprechung bedeutet: Hier ist dieselbe Kraft des heiligen Geistes wirksam. Der heilige Geist verbindet in beiden Fällen Menschen, die einen Text als wesentlichen Ausdruck ihres Glaubens empfinden mit dem, was oder wen sie damit bekennen und mit dem, was sie selbst sind.

Im Falle der Bekenntnisse besagt das: Wer vom heiligen Geist erfüllt ist, kann auch den heiligen Geist in Jesus sehen und bekennen. Im Falle der Schrift sagt es: Die Glaubenden führen ihren Glauben nicht auf sich selbst zurück, sondern betrachten ihn als Wirken des heiligen Geistes. Genau diesen Glauben, dieses Wirken des heiligen Geistes, finden sie auch in der Schrift. Dass man den eigenen Glauben in der Schrift wiedererkennt, kann weder Zufall noch Nachahmung sein, sondern beruht darauf, dass in den Autoren der Schrift derselbe Offenbarungsgeist wirkt, der auch ihren eigenen Glaubenssinn hervorbringt. So können sich jeweils beide Größen bestätigen und kontrollieren: der Glaube der Kirche und die Schrift; das Bekenntnis und die Wirklichkeit Gottes.

Wir fassen zusammen: Wer die christologischen Titel "gebraucht," auf Jesus anwendet, bekennet damit seinen Glauben. Und wer diese Titel so gebraucht, wie sie gedacht sind, ist inspiriert vom heiligen Geist. Und mit seinen Worten gibt man selbst zu verstehen, wer man ist. Denn mit seinen Worten äußert man sich, gibt man sich "weg."

Es ergibt sich auch eine besondere Beziehung zum Zeit- und Weltverständnis der Endzeit. Im Rahmen des Dualismus und vom endzeitlichen Denken der frühen Christen her gibt sich folgende überraschende Entsprechung zwischen Weiß und Schwarz, zwischen Gott und Satan: Der Gott des Himmels sendet jetzt Jesus Christus auf die Erde, und er sendet den heiligen Geist in die Menschen. Seine beiden Hände werden "jetzt" auf Erden für die Menschen offenbar, der Sohn und der heilige Geist. Vom heiligen Geist werden viele erfüllt.

Aber auch der Teufel wird jetzt auf der Erde offenbar. Er fällt vom Himmel zur Erde (Offenbarung 12; Lukas 10). Daraufhin und deshalb werden viele Menschen von Dämonen (bis hin zur Anzahl einer "Legion") besetzt, parallel zur Wirksamkeit des heiligen Geistes auf der Gegenseite. Gottes Reich steht gegen das Reich des Teufels.

Auf der christlichen Seite steht die Inspiration der Glaubenden mit der Frucht der Titel für Jesus ("Sohn Gottes," "Kyrios"). Wer zu Gottes Reich gehört und glaubt, kann diese Titel "hervorbringen" wie der Weinstock die Trauben. Und das sichtbare Resultat des Ganzen ist das Leiden der Glaubenden.

Auf der teuflischen Seite steht die Inspiration böser Machthaber durch Mächte und Gewalten, ihre in Richtung Göttlichkeit angemaßten Titel im alten Rom und anderswo, es findet sich aber auch—

negativ parallel zum Glaubensbekenntnis der Christen—die negative Inspiration des Petrus (Mk. 8:33 "Satan") und die Verfluchung Jesu (1 Kor. 12:3). Dort, wo auf der Seite der Glaubenden das Martyrium steht, geht es hier um Anwendung brutaler Gewalt.

Es ergibt sich daher ein konsequent durchgeführter Dualismus, in dem der "Sitz im Leben" der christologischen Titel und des Bekenntnisses zu Jesus klar erkennbar sind.

2. Unterscheidung der Geister

Vier Einzelfragen sind noch zu klären: Warum ist das Petrusbekenntnis, sofern es Leiden verwirft, vom Teufel? Wie verhält sich das hier Dargestellte zu Mt. 7:28 und verwandten Stellen: "Herr, Herr sagen hilft nichts"? Wie verhält sich zum dargestellten Dualismus der Dualismus bei den Mählern (1 Korinther 8 und 10)? Und: Warum spricht 1 Kor. 12:3 auch von "Anathema Iesus" ("Verflucht sei Jesus")?

Es besteht ein Zusammenhang zwischen Mk. 8:33 (Petrus will das Leiden verhindern und wird Satan genannt); Jak. 2:19 (die Dämonen können nur zittern, nicht aber gute Werke tun) und Mk. 3:11-12; 1:23-25 (Jesus verbietet das "an sich" richtige Bekenntnis der Dämonen). Der inhaltliche Zusammenhang besteht darin, dass die Dämonen keinen Leib besitzen und daher weder leiden noch Werke tun können. Sie sind daher weder gut noch können sie etwas Gutes für die Menschen tun. Sie können daher nur glauben oder das Rechte Bekenntnis nachplappern, aber mit der Substanz der Geduld und Leidenbereitschaft können sie es nicht füllen. Und wer bekennt, aber das Leiden ablehnt wie Petrus, lehnt es auch für sich selbst. Für das Neue Testament liegt im ganzen sehr viel daran, dass das Bekenntnis sich in Leiden bewährt. Das gilt auch für Paulus (1 Thess. 1:3). Wer bekennt, aber nicht leiden will, ist ein Greuel.

In Mt. 7:28 geht es um das rechte Bekenntnis. Also, sollte man annehmen, liegt auch der heilige Geist zugrunde. Aber es könnte ja ähnlich sein wie bei den Dämonen, die zwar den Glauben haben, jedoch keine Werke. Denn wer im Namen Jesu heilen und Exorzismus üben kann, aber nicht gerecht ist, der gehört selbst auf die Seite der Bösen. Ähnlich warnt Judasbrief 7 vor der voreiligen Verfluchung des Teufels. Es könnte ja sein, dass derjenige, der Exorzis-

mus üben und den Teufel sogar verfluchen kann, selbst nicht gut ist. Dann würde der ausgesprochene Fluch auf ihn zurückkehren.

Es könnte sein, dass Paulus den Dualismus von Mahl Gottes und Mahl der Dämonen ad hoc aufstellt, um seine Gemeinde eindeutig beieinander zu halten. Jedenfalls aber wertet er die Teilnahme an einem religiösen Mahl als ein Bekenntnis, und da gilt das Entweder/Oder. Deshalb gibt es den Dualismus auch beim Abendmahl und dessen religionsgeschichtlicher Parallele. Wer am Mahl der Dämonen teilnimmt, ist mindestens von bösen Geistern erfüllt, und deshalb drängt es ihn dahin. Er gehört nicht wirklich zum Leib Christi.

Jesus zu verfluchen, nennt Paulus als Gegenteil des kirchlichen Bekenntnisses "Jesus Christus ist der Herr." Hat das irgendjemand getan zur Zeit des Paulus? Oder ist es nur rhetorisch im Sinne des Dualismus gewissermaßen für die Negativseite ergänzt? Gewiß, im 2. Jahrh. war das gegenüber römischen Behörden die Weise des Abschwörens. Vielleicht haben es auch ein paar Gnostiker so getan. Aber zur Zeit der Entstehung des I Korintherbriefes? Nun setzt Judasbrief 8-9 Christen voraus, die die dualistische Gegenseite (Engel, Mächte) entsprechend verbal behandeln: "lästern," "schmähen"; interessant ist, dass der Brief direkt davor sagt: Sie "setzen das Herrsein außer Kraft." Genau das würde man ja tun, wenn man Jesus nicht als Kyrios ("Herr") betrachtet, sondern ihn verbal verletzt. Damit sind wir wesentlich früher (vielleicht um 70 n. Chr., vielleicht früher); der Judasbrief selbst hält diese Art der Auseinandersetzung für riskant.

Doch erkennbar ist: Paulus erfindet seinen Gegensatz "Kyrios"/"verflucht" offenbar nicht, sondern schildert den Stil der Auseinandersetzung um die Geltung von Engelmächten und Höherem. Das heißt: Paulus zitiert einen Stil, den der Judasbrief für die gegenteilige Praxis bezeugt: Wer ist Kyrios, wer ist von der Gegenseite und muß verflucht werden? Wir fragen: Was sind das für Vorstellungen direkt "neben" dem Christentum? Nun, in der Briefliteratur des Neuen Testaments sind sie nicht selten. Denn vielleicht hilft diese Beobachtung weiter: Die in den neutestamentlichen Briefen zitierten Mächte, Herrlichkeiten und Gewalten sind ohnehin rätselhaft, aber sie sind auch besonders schwierig zu unterscheiden.

Von Herrschaften, Mächten, Gewalten, Kräften, Thronen und Macht-habern in der Welt zwischen Gott und Mensch ist in den neutestamentlichen Briefen die Rede in 1 Kor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Kol.

1:16, 18; 2:10, 15; 1 Petr. 3:22; Jud. 6-8; 2 Petr. 2:10.—Oft herrscht die Anschauung, Jesus habe sie durch seine Auferstehung überwunden; nach Kolosser 1 sind sie schon unter ihm und durch ihn erschaffen.

Sind diese Mächte zwischen Himmel und Erde nun für die Menschen oder gegen sie? Genau diese Frage heißt: Unterscheidung der Geister. Sie gilt für Geister, die in Menschen wohnen, genau so für die Mächte und Gewalten, für die Herrschaften, die hinter den Regierungen stehen. Es wäre gut, wenn man wüßte, welche den Menschen wohl gesonnen sind und welche nicht. Die Gegner des Kolosserbriefes fordern deshalb einfach pauschale Engelverehrung. Aber der Verfasser des Kolosserbriefes richtet sich eindeutig dagegen, denn Jesus Christus ist das Haupt aller dieser Wesenheiten. Er befiehlt. So ist es auch bei Paulus in 1 Kor. 12:3: Wer den Geist Gottes hat, wird Jesus als den einen und einzigen Herrn bezeichnen. Wer ihn nicht hat, weiß nicht genau, ob Jesus nicht doch der Name einer gefährlichen Gegenmacht ist. Man sieht hier, wie religiös unsicher das 1. Jahrh. n. Chr. ist. Ganz klar ist dieses: Wer der Herr ist, ist der Herr auch der überirdischen, himmlischen Mächte (Phil. 2:11). Diese Klarheit gebracht zu haben, ist der Anspruch des Christentums.

3. Das frühe Christentum und der "pneumatologische Dualismus"

Das frühe Christentum wird—gerade im Bereich der Evangelien—durch einen "pneumatologischen Dualismus" bestimmt. Das bedeutet: (Werk und) Bekenntnis eines Christen sollten oder müssen zusammengehören. Dass das eine aus dem anderen hervorgeht, beides aber je bei Ungerechten und Gerechten, wird dann besonders auffällig, wenn diese Entsprechung von Sein und Bekenntnis nicht stimmt. In einer Zeit der Missionskonkurrenz muss man eben auf beides achten, auf den präzisen Wortlaut des Bekenntnisses und ob die Tat dazu passt. Daraus wird noch einmal erkennbar: Im frühen Christentum leben Christen in einer Minderheitssituation. Die scharfe Abgrenzung ist Folge dieser Situation und Bedingung des Überlebens.

Gar nicht genug gewürdigt wird oft die Tatsache, dass das frühe Bekenntnis zu Jesus sich in Titeln äußert, so wie es hier besprochen wurde. Dazu gibt es im Rahmen des Judentums keine Analogie. Man muss dafür wohl auf die besondere Rolle des "Namens Jesus" eingehen, die aber auch für sich etwas Neues ist. Im Englischen heißen

die christologischen Titel (und Bekenntnisprädikate) "names of Jesus," so daß hier der sachliche Zusammenhang hergestellt ist.

Jesus ist nicht ohne metaphysische Konkurrenz im Bereich der Herrschaften, Mächte und Gewalten. Aber Jesus ist "unser Herr," nicht sie. Und wenn Paulus das sagt, ist das immer ein Stück Tröstung. Denn das ist ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Wahrheit in einer schillernden Welt. Und wenn Paulus zitiert "Wir haben einen Gott und Vater ... und einen Herrn Jesus Christus" (1 Kor. 8:6), dann meint das Wort "Herr" hier: Jesus ist als Herr Träger des Namens Gottes, und damit ist mehr als "Schall und Rauch" gemeint. Denn kein Mensch sonst ist Ort für die Anwesenheit Gottes durch seinen Namen; der Name ist das "Wesen." Jesus ist insofern Mensch und Gott zugleich (Phil. 2:11). Durch diese doppelte Qualifikation ist er—und kein anderer—als Mittler geeignet.

Wenn der hier beschrittene Weg der richtige sein sollte, nämlich die Frage, wer Jesus ist, wie man ihn nennen soll, zu verbinden mit dem bereits vorösterlichen Streit, ob Jesus den Geist Gottes oder den Geist Beelzebuls (des Teufels) in sich hat, dann liegt der entscheidende Bruch nicht im Ostergraben, sondern in der bereits vorösterlich belegten Titulatur "Sohn Gottes." Je nachdem, wo die Jünger und Jüngerinnen den Geist Jesu "verorteten," bei Gott oder beim Satan, war er Sohn Gottes oder Kind des Teufels. Wenn unser Weg so richtig ist, geht es von Anfang an um ein trinitarisches Verständnis, da eben Sohn und Geist nach dem hier vorgetragenen Verständnis unlösbar verknüpft sind.

Dann wäre uns das frühe Christentum auch ein Stück fremder geworden. Seine Geschichte ist dann wesentlich bestimmt durch die Frage nach der Legitimität der geistlich-charismatischen Vollmacht Jesu—und zwar von Anfang an. "Geistlich-charismatisch" das heißt: bezogen auf das sichtbare Wirken seiner freien Vollmacht; verwirklicht wurde diese in Bereichen, die nicht "ernsthaft systematisch-theologisch" sind, sondern die so fragwürdige Bereiche wie Exorzismen, Wunderheilungen und Prophezeiungen betreffen.

Auch dass jüdische Kreise Jesus zum Tode verurteilen wollten, hinge dann zuallererst damit zusammen, dass er als falscher Prophet mit einem teuflischen Geist betrachtet wurde, denn er konnte durch kein Zeichen vom Himmel her beweisen, dass er seine Vollmacht vom Himmel hatte (Mk. 8:11-12). Darauf jedenfalls weist die Frage

nach der Gottessohnschaft in Mk. 14:61. Der Vorwurf der Gotteslästerung träfe Jesus zu Recht, wenn er Gottes Geist nicht hätte.

Der vorstehende Beitrag ist Henk Jan de Jonge (Leiden) gewidmet in Anerkennung seiner Jahrzehnte währenden kostbaren Anregungen im Fach Neues Testament.

“RECONCILE YOURSELVES TO GOD.”
AN UNUSUAL INTERPRETATION OF 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20
IN ITS CONTEXT

Reimund Bieringer

After a solemn introduction in 2 Cor. 5:20 Paul addresses the Corinthian community with the aorist imperative passive καταλλάγητε which is invariably translated into English as “be reconciled” (or “let yourselves be reconciled”). There seems to be a far-reaching consensus that the human activity that is commanded by Paul in the imperative is limited to the acceptance of God’s gift of reconciliation that Paul had elaborated upon in 5:18-19.

Outside the English-speaking world, there are, however, a few voices (especially in French-speaking circles) that sound a different cord. Jacques Dupont said in his 1952 article on reconciliation: “Le sens moyen: ‘se réconcilier’ paraît plus naturel,” and he explained the meaning of the middle form as follows: “Dieu a fait le premier pas, mais il demande à l’homme de faire le second.”¹ In 1989 Jan Lambrecht suggested the reflexive translation “reconcile yourselves” in an article² and repeated the same interpretation in his 1999 commentary on 2 Corinthians in the *Sacra Pagina* series,³ even though his suggestion had since then met with little enthusiasm. For instance, Margaret E. Thrall had expressed her objections in her 1994 commentary on 2 Corinthians in the ICC series, in the following words:

The plea to the hearers is: καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. The imperative is significant, since it shows that man is not merely a passive participant in a purely automatic process. Whether this means, however, that the verb should be seen as actually having a reflexive force is more doubtful. To translate, “Reconcile yourselves to God” perhaps goes too far in this

¹ J. Dupont, “La réconciliation dans la théologie de saint Paul,” *EstBib* 11 (1952), pp. 255-302, esp. 267; revised: J. Dupont, *La réconciliation dans la théologie de saint Paul*, Brugge/Paris/Leuven 1953.

² J. Lambrecht, “‘Reconcile yourselves ...’: A Reading of 2 Cor. 5,11-21,” in: L. de Lorenzi (ed.), *The Diakonia of the Spirit* (2 Co 4:7-7:4), Rome 1989, pp. 161-191, esp. 188-189; repr. in: R. Bieringer/J. Lambrecht (eds), *Studies in 2 Corinthians*, Leuven 1994, pp. 363-412, esp. 390-391.

³ J. Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, Collegeville 1999, p. 100.

direction. God and man are not seen by Paul as equal partners in the process, although God's activity cannot come to full fruition without the positive human response.⁴

In this study we shall focus on the "mystery" of καταλλάγητε in 2 Cor. 5:20d. We shall first undertake a grammatical analysis of aorist passives in general. Second we shall discuss the meaning of the aorist passive forms of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω in Greek literature. Finally, we shall turn to an interpretation of 2 Cor. 5:20d in its immediate context.

1. *A Grammatical Analysis of the Aorist (Imperative) Passive*

a. *Aorist Passive Forms Understood as Passives*

In a passive sentence the subject is not the one who acts, but the one who undergoes or receives the action.⁵ In the normal meaning of the passive nothing is stated about the subject's attitude toward the action which is directed at the subject. The permissive ("let/allow yourself to be ...") and the causative ("get/cause yourself to be ...") meanings of the passive on the other hand suggest a more or less cooperative attitude.⁶

The verbs διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω are transitive and are therefore expected to be used in the passive. There are several instances in biblical and extra-biblical literature where these verbs are used in undoubtedly passive forms. Other occurrences are ambiguous.⁷

The normal meaning of the passive is most frequently presupposed in the English translations of 2 Cor. 5:20d ("be/become reconciled"), German and Dutch translations usually prefer the permissive sense ("let yourselves be reconciled"). The permissive aspect seems already to be a concession to the conviction that the normal passive meaning is not satisfactory in the case of this imperative. It is a hesitant attempt to introduce an ever so slight active nuance into the passive.

⁴ M.E. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* 1, Edinburgh 1994, pp. 437-438. See also the critical voices in the discussion which followed Lambrecht's paper at the 11th ecumenical colloquium paulinum which is documented in Lambrecht, "Reconcile yourselves ...," pp. 192-209 (394-411).

⁵ See A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, Nashville repr. 1934, p. 815.

⁶ See BDF § 314 (cf. § 317).

⁷ See below, pp. 18-22.

b. *Aorist Passive Forms Understood as "Middle Passives"*

Historically aorist passives are latecomers in the Greek language. They gradually took over the function of the aorist middle. According to Robertson, this development has come to its end in modern Greek where "the passive aorist form is almost invariably used for both the middle and the passive ideas."⁸ Moulton is convinced that middle and passive voices

were not differentiated with anything like the same sharpness as is inevitable in analytic formations such as we use in English. We have seen how the bulk of the forms were indifferently middle or passive, and how even those which were appropriated to one voice or the other are perpetually crossing the frontier.⁹

According to Moulton, the permissive aspect is the common ground between them. Since the dividing line between middle and passive "is a fine one at best,"¹⁰ the decision between the two can only be based on the context. With regard to ἡγέρθη Moulton states, "But if the context (as in 1 Co 15) strongly emphasizes the action of God, the passive becomes the right translation."¹¹

The consequences of this state of affairs for the aorist passive are summarized well by Herbert Weir Smyth in his grammar: "The aorist passive of some active verbs has a reflexive or middle sense, either sometimes or always."¹² Moulton gives the example of Rom. 10:3 τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν, which the KJV translates: they "have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." δι-αλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω could thus belong to the group of verbs which have aorist passives with a reflexive or middle sense in some of the forms. Admittedly none of the grammars we consulted mentioned either of these two verbs as examples. However, none of these grammars made any claim to be complete.

If we assume that καταλλάγητε is an aorist passive form used in a

⁸ Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 818.

⁹ J.H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* 1, Edinburgh ³1908 (repr. 1988), p. 162.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* Cf. B. Botte, *Grammaire grecque du Nouveau Testament*, Paris 1933, p. 50: "Le moyen et le passif n'ont jamais été nettement distincts en grec. ... La distinction de sens constitue parfois un problème d'exégèse difficile à trancher."

¹¹ Moulton, *Grammar* 1, p. 163.

¹² H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, Cambridge MA 1956, repr. 1984 (orig. 1920), p. 222 nr. 814.

middle sense, we need to remember that middle forms like passives can be used in a normal way ("reconcile yourselves") and, at least according to the grammar of Blaß-Debrunner-Funk, also with a permissive meaning ("let yourselves be reconciled").¹³ In the case of καταλλάγητε the causative meaning is impossible for theological reasons.

On the basis of this investigation, the grammar allows for three translations of καταλλάγητε: (1) middle: "reconcile yourselves"; (2) passive permissive: "let yourselves be reconciled"; (3) passive: "be reconciled." On the basis of a grammatical investigation alone it is impossible to make a choice between these three possibilities. As Moulton has pointed out the decision must be taken on the basis of the context, the choice is not to be made by the grammarian, but by the exegete and biblical theologian.¹⁴

2. Aorist Passive Forms of δι-/καταλλάσσω in Greek Literature

The verbs διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω as well as the cognate nouns διαλλαγή and καταλλαγή are virtually synonymous in Greek literature. In light of the scope of this investigation our focus will be on the verbs, in particular the aorist passive forms with special attention to the imperatives. δι-/καταλλαγ- terminology is used in Greek literature as a relational term to indicate a change from anger to affection, from hatred to love, from enmity to friendship. The process of reconciliation minimally presupposes two parties who at some point enjoyed a relationship of friendship which was broken. The breach in the relationship can be the fault of one of the parties or both. Consequently the breach might mean that both parties are separated from each other and in need of reconciliation. It could, however, also mean that only one party is separated from the other, while the other does not consider the relationship as broken, even though an offence will hardly ever leave the offended party completely uninvolved. In Greek literature the two parties can be either god(s) or humans, individuals or communities or even abstract realities.

We need to distinguish four major uses of δι-/καταλλαγ-terminology: social-political (diplomatic), non-political interpersonal, psychological

¹³ See *BDF* §317. Since *BDF* uses the same translation for the permissive passive and the permissive middle ("let yourself be ...") the difference between the two remains unclear. It seems to us that what *BDF* describes as permissive middle are *de facto* permissive passive forms.

¹⁴ Moulton, *Grammar* 1, p. 163.

and religious. In the case of the social-political use the parties involved in conflict and reconciliation are peoples, cities, groups and individuals with political responsibility. In the case of the interpersonal use the parties are husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, lovers, friends, and in the case of the psychological use, for instance, pleasure and pain. Wherever conflict and reconciliation involve the divine and humans, we speak of the religious use.

The initiative to overcome the situation of conflict and to reconcile might be taken by either of the directly involved parties, by the offending or the offended party. The party who tries to initiate reconciliation might be prompted or urged by a third party who is not at all involved in the conflict. This third party's involvement might be limited to an intercessory role. It could also be the active role of a reconciler (διαλλακτής), a real mediator or negotiator. But no matter how active and crucial this role might be, real reconciliation will not come about until the conflicting parties have reconciled themselves to each other. The process of reconciliation can be supported and facilitated by third parties, but not achieved vicariously for them. Consequently the meaning of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω differs considerably, when it is used to describe third party interventions from its use to qualify the action of two directly involved parties.

a. Categories of the Usage of δι-/καταλλάσσω

The verbs διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω are used in the active, middle and passive voices.¹⁵ The active verb forms occur in transitive constructions (the direct object is always the party to be reconciled) according to the following format:

- A1. X reconciles Y (acc.) to Z (dat. or πρὸς + acc.).
- A2. X reconciles Y and Z (acc.) to each other (πρὸς ἀλλήλους).
- A3. Y reconciles Z (acc.) to him/herself (ἑαυτῷ/ἑαυτῇ or εἰς αὐτόν/αὐτήν).

To our knowledge there are no instances in Greek literature where διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω are used in verb forms that from a morphological point of view are exclusively middle (as, for instance, in the aorist middle). But many of the forms shared by the middle and the passive are read by scholars as having a middle meaning. In addition, as we have

¹⁵ In this section we use the abbreviations A for instances of active, M of middle and P of passive verb forms. IM stands for imperative middle and IP for imperative passive.

pointed out above, a number of the exclusively passive forms of the aorist can justifiably be expected to have a middle (reflexive) meaning. The reflexive meaning can in Greek also be expressed with the active forms of the verb plus the reflexive pronoun as direct object even though we are not aware of any instances where this occurs in extra-Biblical Greek literature. The middle reflexive instances are characterized by the fact that there is no third party and that the subject is always a party in need of reconciliation. The following formats are logically possible:

M1. Y reconciles himself/herself (middle verb) to Z.

M2. Y reconciles (active verb) himself/herself (reflexive pronoun) to Z.

The passive forms are the simple inversion of the active forms. Third party mediation is possible. The primary agent of the passive action (normally expressed with ὑπό) is either a third party or identical with the indirect object of the construction. It should, however, be noted that the agent is virtually never expressed which accounts for the fact that many passive occurrences are ambiguous. The secondary agent (the means or instrument) that must be clearly distinguished from the primary agent is expressed a little more frequently. The following formats are logically possible:

P1. Y is reconciled to Z (dat.) [by X (ὑπό)] [by means of (διά + gen., ἐν + dat.)] (cf. A1).

P2. Y and Z are reconciled to each other [by X] (cf. A2).

P3. Z is reconciled to Y (dat.) [by Y] (cf. A3).

The imperative can be called a special case in the usage of reconciliation terminology. To our knowledge only aorist imperative passive forms occur in Greek literature. Thus no present or aorist imperatives active nor present imperatives passive occur. In keeping with what was stated above, they can either have middle or passive meaning. In analogy with the active forms, passive imperatives can either occur as a third party commanding one of the directly involved parties to be reconciled (to reconcile himself/herself) or as one of the directly involved parties addressing a plea to be reconciled (to reconcile himself/herself) to the respectively other. When the imperative is expressed by the offended party, it is more likely (even though not exclusively so) that the voice is middle; when it is expressed by a third party, the passive voice is more likely. The following forms are logically possible:

passive:

- IP1. X commands Y: Be reconciled to Z (by Z).
- IP2. X commands Y: Be reconciled to Z (by me = X).
- IP3. X commands Y and Z: Be reconciled to each other.
- IP4. X commands Y: Be reconciled to me.

middle:

- IM1. X commands Y: Reconcile yourself to Z.
- IM2. X commands Y and Z: Reconcile yourselves to each other.
- IM3. X commands Y: Reconcile yourself to me.

It has proved extremely difficult to formulate criteria to determine when aorist passive forms, and imperatives in particular, must be seen as middle and when as passive. This is to a large extent due to the fact that, as already mentioned, primary agents are normally not expressed. We assume that this is due to the fact that Greek authors use the active forms to express the statements for which primary agents could be used in passive constructions. When Greek uses a passive verb form, there must be other intentions that are primary. On the basis of our observations we are convinced that passive constructions with reconciliation terminology have the function of directing the focus to the reconciled state as the result of the reconciling action which could equally well be expressed by the noun "reconciliation." The question who was the offender and who was offended as well as the question who might bring about the reconciliation are not the primary focus. All that is of interest is that there was a friendly relationship before, that there is a conflict now and that reconciliation needs to be brought about. In the case of an imperative passive the focus is precisely on bringing about a reconciled state, leaving unsaid who needs to be reconciled and who is expected to act as reconciler. Middle reflexive forms emphasize the action of reconciliation as well as the subject of the reflexive action. It is clear that the subject of the action is the offending party. Whether or not the second party (mostly expressed as an indirect object) is in need of reconciliation is not of interest to the speaker.

In what follows, we shall apply these general considerations to the contexts in the Greek literature where aorist passive forms of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω occur. Even a cursory contact with specialized studies and translations demonstrates that scholars have frequently opposing views regarding the question whether a particular aorist passive needs to

be interpreted as having a middle reflexive or passive meaning.¹⁶ We shall present an interpretation of a selection of major occurrences of aorist passive forms of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω in Greek literature.

b. *Aorist Passive Forms of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω with Passive Meaning*

In the 5th century BCE Euripides describes a scene in his play *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1157-1158) in which Clytemnestra accuses Agamemnon of taking her by force to be his wife, after killing her husband Tantalus and her baby. Her father Tyndareus rescued Agamemnon from the revenge which her brother wanted to take. Then she continues to say: οὗ σοι καταλλαχθεῖσα περὶ σὲ καὶ δόμους συμμαρτυρήσεις ὥς ἄμεμπτος ἦ γυνή.¹⁷ In this context, the sole focus of the aorist passive participle is the resulting state of reconciliation. The text does not go into detail about who initiated the reconciliation. The context implicitly suggests, however, that Clytemnestra reconciled herself to Agamemnon.¹⁸ She also doubts that Agamemnon reciprocated the reconciliation, since he is about to sacrifice another child, their daughter Iphigenia. Clytemnestra carefully illustrates the consequences of the reconciled state with being a blameless wife, chaste in love, an honor to his house, "that so your coming in might be with joy and your going out with gladness."¹⁹ Reconciliation and its consequences are important as an argument in her attempt to stop Agamemnon from killing Iphigenia.

In the *Republic* (8.566E), Plato describes a tyrant who gives promises until he is reconciled to some of his enemies and has destroyed others. Then he will go to war to secure his power. Here again the imperative passive of καταλλάσσω (ὅταν δέ γε οἶμαι πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω ἐχθροὺς τοῖς μὲν καταλλαγῇ) is not interested in the details of the reconciliation. The question whether the reconciliation comes about because the tyrant changes his attitude out of his own accord or as a result of some diplomatic intervention is not of interest in the text.²⁰

¹⁶ See, e.g., below, pp. 22-25.

¹⁷ F.A. Paley, *Euripides* 3, London 1860, p. 523.

¹⁸ For a different interpretation see S.E. Porter, *Kataλλάσσω in Ancient Greek Literature, with Reference to the Pauline Writings*, Cordoba 1994, p. 25: "Grammatically, this aorist passive participle implies that Clytemnestra, as implied although possibly not willing subject, was reconciled to Agamemnon by means of her father."

¹⁹ For a slightly different view, see Porter, *Kataλλάσσω*, p. 25.

²⁰ Porter, *Kataλλάσσω*, p. 34, does speculate about such questions that are difficult to answer.

A similar use of the aorist passive in a resultative sense is found in Philo's book *De Iosepho* 99, when he talks about the chief butler who, after having been reconciled (καταλλαγείς δὲ ὁ ἀρχιοινοχόος), proved to be an ungrateful man by forgetting Joseph "who had alleviated all his misfortunes."²¹ Yonge translates καταλλαγείς with "released," thus showing his support for a resultative interpretation.

In *Antiquitates Judaicae* VI 353 Flavius Josephus gives an account which is very parallel to 1 Sam. 29:4. Saul was in conflict with David who then defected to the Philistines. King Achish had allowed David to join their camp, but the other Philistine leaders questioned his fidelity and did not allow him to take part in their campaign. The reason they give reads as follows:

1 Sam. 29:4
καὶ ἐν τίνι
διαλλαγήσεται οὗτος
τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ

Josephus, *Ant.* VI 353
καὶ γὰρ οὕτω παρέξειν
καταλλαγῆναι
πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην

The one to whom David is to be reconciled is expressed in the dative in 1 Sam. 29:4 (τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ) and with the preposition πρὸς + acc. by Flavius Josephus. The means of reconciliation is expressed in 1 Sam. 29:4 with ἐν τίνι and specified as the heads of the Philistine soldiers (οὐχὶ ἐν ταῖς κεφαλαῖς τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων). In the context the unexpressed primary agent of the reconciliation can only be David. Consequently one might be inclined to translate the future passive verb form διαλλαγήσεται as having a middle reflexive sense ("and by which means will he reconcile himself to his lord?").²² Taking into account the fact that it is not David who needs to be reconciled to Saul, but rather Saul to David, it is, however, more likely that David is feared to betray the Philistines in order "to be reconciled" to Saul, in order to bring about reconciliation. The text thus only focuses on the result and less on the means to reach it. David's potential killing of the Philistine soldiers would then only be seen as one factor, albeit an important one,²³ in the process of

²¹ *The Works of Philo. Complete and Unabridged*, new updated edition, trans. by C.D. Yonge, Peabody 1965, p. 443.

²² See the NETS translation: "and by what means could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord?" (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/09-1reigns-net.pdf>). In 1 Sam. 29:4 the original Hebrew verb which the LXX translates as διαλλαγήσεται is נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, a hithpa'el form of נִשְׁחַח which in the hithpa'el means "to make oneself acceptable to."

²³ Cf. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*, trans. by L.C.L. Brenton, Peabody 1851, repr. 1986, 1992: "and wherewith will he be reconciled to his master?"

how reconciliation would come about. The parallel formulation in Flavius Josephus which uses καταλλαγήναι seems even more likely to focus exclusively on the result, and Whiston's translation as a passive seems to us to be correct: "for that he afforded him an opportunity of being reconciled to his master, by doing a mischief to our army."²⁴

In *Antiquitates Judaicae* XI 195 Josephus relates the conflict between Artaxerxes and his wife Vashti. Even though the king would have very much wanted to be reconciled, the law did not permit it (καταλλαγήναι μὲν διὰ τὸν νόμον οὐκ ἐδύνατο). All the king seems to be interested in is a reconciled state, no matter how it could be achieved. Thus the passive form καταλλαγήναι is best understood as a passive here.²⁵

There are several instances of the aorist passive of διαλλάσσω in the papyri. We shall limit our investigation to the most striking parallel to 2 Cor. 5:20, viz a papyrus letter which Adolf Deissmann lists as "Brief Nr. 14" (*BGU* III 846)²⁶ and entitles: "Brief des verlorenen Sohnes Antonis Longos an seine Mutter Neilus" and which is dated in the 2nd century CE (Faijûm). In line 10, the Egyptian Antonis writes to his mother: παρακαλῶ σοι, μήτηρ, δι[ι]αλλάγητί μοι. In line 12 he admits: οἶδα ὅτι ἡμάρτηκα. Here one of the conflicting parties, not a third party, makes the intercession (see above, IM3). It is clear that Antonis is the offending party²⁷ and he is asking for reconciliation. In both cases one might ask oneself whether the offended party (God and Neilus respectively) really needs to be reconciled and whether it would not be more appropriate to ask forgiveness.²⁸ 2 Macc. 7:33 leaves no doubt that God as offended party is angry for a while and needs reconciliation. We do not have any direct information about the attitude of Neilus to her son, but the fact that she had gone to the metropolis might indicate, as Deissmann suggests, that she went there to look for her prodigal son. Therefore it might be advisable not to interpret δι[ι]αλλάγητι as reflexive, as Deissmann does in

²⁴ *The Works of Josephus. Complete and Unabridged*, new updated edition, trans. by W. Whiston, Peabody 1995, p. 178.

²⁵ A reflexive translation of καταλλαγήναι would not make sense, since in the logic of the story, the king was not the offending party and therefore did not need to reconcile himself to her.

²⁶ A. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten. Das Neue Testament und die neuentdeckten Texte der hellenistisch-römischen Welt*, Tübingen ²⁻³1909, pp. 153-158.

²⁷ So also Deissmann, *Licht*, p. 157.

²⁸ Cf. J. Jeremias, "'Laß alida deine Gabe' (Mt. 5.23f.)," in: *id.*, *Abba. Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte*, Göttingen 1966, pp. 103-107 on Matt. 5:24.

his translation,²⁹ but rather to see it as a true passive, as is found in the English translation of Deissmann's book: "I beseech thee, mother, be reconciled to me."³⁰ In this case all Antonis would be saying is: I want reconciliation to come about between us, no matter how. There would be no focus on the question who needs to be reconciled.

In 1 Cor. 7:11 Paul talks about a wife who separates from her husband as an exception from the command of the Lord "that the wife should not separate from her husband" (7:10). The separation presupposes that the wife has something against her husband. Nothing is said whether she is justified in what she has against him, nor are we told what the attitude of the husband toward the wife is. In the context it seems that Paul is mainly interested in the result, namely reconciliation when he uses the aorist passive imperative of καταλλάσσω in the third person singular: μενέτω ἄγαμος ἢ τῷ ἀνδρὶ καταλλαγήτω. If the problem is exclusively on her side, this state of reconciliation can be reached by the woman reconciling herself to her husband. But if there is also a problem on the side of the husband (if for no other reason than the fact that she left him),³¹ then the fact that the wife reconciles herself does not suffice (in Paul's line of reasoning), for the husband also needs to reconcile himself to her in order that the married life can be resumed. These distinctions are, however, outside the horizon of the author who is simply focused on the outcome. Therefore, we prefer—with RSV/NRSV and against many if not most of the modern Western versions—the most open translation which is the passive "be reconciled."³² Paul is thus telling the separated wife that she should see to it that reconciliation will be realized (because only then married life can be resumed) or take the other option of staying unmarried.

In Rom. 5:10 Paul uses two aorist passive forms of καταλλάσσω. There are hardly any examples in Greek literature which are more definitely passive. Paul excludes a reflexive sense by saying: ἐχθροὶ ὄντες

²⁹ Deissmann, *Licht*, p. 129: "Mutter, v[e]rsöhne Dich mit mir."

³⁰ A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient Near East*, trans. L.R.M. Strachan, London 1910, p. 177.

³¹ I.H. Marshall, "The Meaning of Reconciliation," in: R.A. Guelich (ed.), *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology*. FS G.E. Ladd, Grand Rapids 1978, pp. 117-132, esp. 121: The husband's reaction might be: "you cannot run off and leave me, and then just come back when you choose."

³² Cf. Porter, *Katalláσσω*, p. 121: "she may need to persuade her husband to lay aside any ill feelings he may have as a result of either their conflict before the separation or her act of separation itself."

(5:10). Even though we were enemies, we were reconciled to God (by God) (see above P3). The other indicator is the use of the secondary agent διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (5:10). Through the death of his son we were reconciled to God by God. This is the passive version of 2 Cor. 5:18: “God ... who reconciled us to himself through Christ” (see above, A3).

The case of the person who is offering his gift before the altar in Matt. 5:24 is probably similar. What interferes with the offering is the memory that his ἀδελφός has something against him. The Matthean Jesus is saying here that one needs to be in a state of reconciliation (with one's brothers) in order to offer one's gift at the altar: καὶ ὕπαγε πρῶτον διαλλάγηθι τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου. The sense of the aorist passive imperative διαλλάγηθι depends on the type of conflict that the text presupposes. We are only told about a party who potentially has something against another. The question remains open whether he is justified in this or not. If he is not and the one who is offering his gift is not guilty, a reflexive interpretation of διαλλάγηθι does not make sense. But even if the offering disciple is the guilty part, as Joachim Jeremias³³ tried to defend, διαλλάγηθι is asking more than “go and ask forgiveness.” Jesus is telling the man “be reconciled,”³⁴ i.e., see to it that a reconciled state will come about. Once again, the focus is on the result, not the way to get there.³⁵

c. Aorist Passive Forms of δι-/καταλλάσσω with Middle Reflexive Meaning

We now turn to a number of prominent occurrences of aorist passive forms of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω which are in our view to be interpreted as carrying a middle reflexive meaning.

The tragedy *Ajax* by Sophocles (496-406 BCE) is the oldest extant Greek text that uses καταλλάσσω (743-744). It is unique insofar as it applies καταλλάσσω to the relationship between the gods and humans. After the events of the *Iliad* and the Trojan War Greek leaders do not give Achilles' armor to Ajax, but to Odysseus. Ajax is angry (41) he de-

³³ Jeremias, “‘Laß allda deine Gabe’,” p. 104.

³⁴ The passive translation is found in NAB, NJB, RSV and NRSV. The reflexive translation is found in Dutch (Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap), French (Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible) translations and German (Einheitsübersetzung).

³⁵ Here we are in agreement with Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, p. 122, who considers the question whether the brother's anger is justified “besides the point” and concludes: “if there is disunity, it must be reconciled.”

cides to take revenge on the leaders. Athena tricks him into believing that the sheep that the Achaeans had taken as spoil are indeed the leaders. In his rage Ajax kills some and tortures others. When he comes to his senses he says “Well, I shall go to the bathing-place and the meadows by the shore, to wash away my defilement and escape from the heavy anger (μῆνιν) of the goddess” (654-656). A little later, right before he leaves the scene, he states, “for I am going where I must journey, but you must do what I tell you, and perhaps you may soon learn that, even if I am unhappy now, I have been saved” (690-692). After he has left, the choir says, “Ajax has been converted from his anger (μετανεγνώσθη θυμῶν) against the sons of Atreus and from his mighty quarrels”³⁶ (716-717). At that point a messenger arrives from his half-brother Teucer. Upon the messenger’s question as to the whereabouts of Ajax, the choir leader responds: Ἀλλ’ οἰχεταιί τοι, πρὸς τὸ κέρδιον³⁷ τραπείς γνώμης, θεοῖσιν ὡς καταλλαχθῇ χόλου (743-744).

The understanding of the aorist passive καταλλαχθῇ depends on the interpretation of χόλου. In the older translations and commentaries, χόλου is seen as the anger of the gods.³⁸ More recently, however, χόλου is mostly interpreted as Ajax’s anger.³⁹ W.B. Stanford gives as his reason

³⁶ For this and the previous quote we use the translation of Sophocles, *Ajax*. Edited with Introduction, Translation and Commentary by A.F. Garvie, Warminster 1998.

³⁷ For this reading we follow Sophocles, *Ajax*. *Electra*. *Oedipus Tyrannus* (ed. H. Lloyd-Jones, Cambridge MA/London 1994), p. 98 and Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Garvie), p. 74. For an author who prefers the reading of the superlative κέρδιστον see Sophocles, *The Plays and Fragments VII. The Ajax* (ed. R.C. Jebb, Amsterdam 1967; orig. Cambridge 1907), pp. 116-117 with the text-critical information. The superlative is also read in the critical edition Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. J. de Romilly, Paris 1976), p. 78.

³⁸ *The Ajax of Sophocles* (trans. R.C. Trevelyan, London 1919), <http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/ajax.html>, access April 17, 2008: “Well, he is gone. To wisest purpose now, / His mind is turned, to appease heaven’s wrath” and Sophocles, *Tragedien* (trans. E. De Waele, Antwerpen 1972), p. 40: “de wrok der goden van zich af te wenden.” Cf. C. Spicq, *Notes de lexicographie néo-testamentaire* 1, Fribourg/Göttingen 1978, p. 409 n. 3: “Ajax, sur qui pèse la colère des dieux, s’efforce de se réconcilier avec eux par des rites expiatoires.” Spicq’s paraphrase “Ajax ... s’efforce de se réconcilier avec eux” is misleading because by his reflexive translation of καταλλαχθῇ he suggests that the focus is on Ajax’s anger, while he understands χόλου as the anger of the gods. What he seems to mean is “Ajax, on whom the anger of the gods weighs, reconciles the gods to himself by means of expiatory rites.” But the grammatical construction in 744 with the dative θεοῖσιν does not support such an interpretation.

³⁹ Sophocles, *Plays and Fragments* (ed. Jebb), p. 117: “to make his peace with the gods,” J.C. Kamerbeek/H. Schreuder/A. Parker, *The Plays of Sophocles* 1. *The Ajax*, Leiden ²1963, p. 156: “ὡς τοῦ τῶν θεῶν (genit. object.) χόλου λήξῃ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς καταλλαχθῇ”; Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. W.B. Stanford, London/New York 1963), p. 157; Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Lloyd-Jones, Cambridge MA/London 1994), p. 99: “to be reconciled with the gods with whom he had been angry,” Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Garvie), p. 75: “to be reconciled to the gods after his anger.” Cf.

for understanding *χόλου* as Ajax's anger the alleged parallel between *Αἴας μετανεγνώσθη θυμῶν* in *Ajax* 718 and *θεοῖσιν ὡς καταλλαχθῆι χόλου*.⁴⁰ In both cases an aorist passive verb form is followed by the genitive of a noun expressing anger. Authors who interpret *χόλου* as Ajax's anger translate *καταλλαχθῆι* as "to make his peace" which seems to assume a reflexive understanding or as a real passive "to be reconciled."

The comparison with *Ajax* 718 is, however, not without difficulties. The reason is that in 744 there are a number of important differences. In the construction with *καταλλάσσω* the focus is on the party to whom one is reconciled or reconciles oneself, namely *θεοῖσιν*. The special emphasis is even enhanced by the placing *θεοῖσιν* first in the clause. In the construction with *μετανεγνώσκειν* in 711 the focus is that from which Ajax repents, namely the anger. In 744 the function of the genitive *χόλου* is not as clear as that of *θυμῶν* in 711. Assuming a parallel function of both genitives in their respective context, some see in *χόλου* an expression of that from which those who need reconciliation are to be liberated.⁴¹ Some translations like "to make his peace with God" ignore *χόλου* completely.⁴² Recently two authors have suggested a temporal nuance in the genitive of separation and translate *χόλου* as "after his anger"⁴³ or "with whom he had been angry."⁴⁴

Even though some translations render both *θυμός* in 711 and *χόλος* in 744 as "anger," we should not lose sight of the fact that two different nouns are used. In 656 Sophocles uses *μῆνις* to refer explicitly to the "anger of the goddess."⁴⁵ The decisive argument seems to us to be that in *Ajax* Sophocles uses *χόλος* in 41 to describe Ajax's anger concerning the armor of Achilles, the foundational anger of the play: *χόλω βαρυν-*

J.A. Fitzmyer, "Reconciliation in Pauline Theology," in: *id.*, *To Advance the Gospel. New Testament Studies*, New York 1981, pp. 162-185, esp. 173-174 n. 20: "it seems more likely in view of the fundamental thrust of the play that what is meant is that Ajax has gone to reconcile himself to the gods by his own death." According to Dupont, "La réconciliation," p. 263, Ajax reconciles himself by ritual purifications. It should be noted that in the immediate context of 743-744 the text does not specify the means of reconciliation. This is also emphasized by Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, p. 24. See, however, 710-712: "Ajax has ... once more performed with full sacrifice the rites of the gods."

⁴⁰ Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Stanford), p. 157 (see also p. 154).

⁴¹ See Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. de Romilly), p. 78, who comments on *χόλου*: "sur ce génitif d'éloignement, cf. 717-718."

⁴² Sophocles, *Plays and Fragments* (ed. Jebb), p. 117.

⁴³ Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Garvie), p. 74.

⁴⁴ Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Lloyd-Jones), p. 99.

⁴⁵ For a translation which renders the three Greek nouns as "anger," see Sophocles, *Ajax* (ed. Garvie), pp. 68 and 74.

θεῖς τῶν Ἀχὺλλείων ὀπλῶν. It would thus make sense that using the same word for anger in 744 Sophocles is referring to the reconciliation of the very anger which was at the root of all that followed. This is also supported by the fact that in 744 the indirect object of καταλλαχθῆ is θεοῖσιν. This indicates that the reconciliation is not aiming at the gods or their anger, but that someone else or that person's anger is reconciled to the gods. While in 656 Ajax himself speaks of escaping the wrath of the goddess and in 716-717 the choir had referred to Ajax's repenting from his anger, in 744 the choir leader interprets Ajax's intention as "in order that he reconcile himself to the gods from his anger." We interpret the genitive χόλου as expressing separation. The reflexive interpretation of the passive καταλλαχθῆ is thus supported by the fact that the text is speaking about Ajax's own anger, by the fact that the indirect object is "the gods" and that Ajax is described here as the active person who has left to accomplish something.⁴⁶

In his *Symposion* 193 Plato describes the original form of wholeness (ἦμεν ὅλοι) which humans lost because of their injustice (διὰ τὴν ἀδικίαν). According to Plato love is the desire and pursuit of that original wholeness. He exhorts people "to a pious observance of the gods in all things" and promises them that Eros will enable them to discover their true lovers, φίλοι ... γενόμενοι and διαλλαγέντες τῷ θεῷ. Here also the meaning of the aorist passive needs clarification. One might consider the possibility of seeing both φίλοι ... γενόμενοι and διαλλαγέντες τῷ θεῷ as passive or in understanding διαλλαγέντες as the resulting state of φίλοι ... γενόμενοι interpreted as actively making friends. In the context, however, it is clear that the wholeness that is to be restored was lost because of human injustice. Humans therefore need to reconcile themselves. Therefore, φίλοι ... γενόμενοι and διαλλαγέντες τῷ θεῷ are more likely to be parallel expressions which reinforce each other's meaning.

The *Vita Aesopi* (first century CE) relates how Aesop mediated in a conflict between the king and the Samians. We compare *Vita G* and *Vita W*.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The only grammatical alternative would be that καταλλαχθῆ is interpreted as passive and the implied agent are the gods: "in order that he be reconciled of his anger to the gods by the gods." This fits less with the context.

⁴⁷ B.E. Perry, *Studies in the Text History of the Life and Fables of Aesop*, Chico 1981.

Vita Aesopi G 100

Αἰσώπος εἶπεν·

«καταλλάγηθι Σαμίοις.»

ὁ βασιλεὺς·

«κατήλλαγμαί.»

...

ἐνθα ὁμολόγει

κατηλλάχθαι αὐτοῖς

ἔνεκεν [τοῦ] Αἰσώπου

Vita Aesopi W 100

Αἰσώπος ἔφη·

«δέομαί σου, δέσποτα,

διαλλάγηθι Σαμίοις.»

εἰπόντος δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως·

«κατήλλαγμαί.»

...

ἔνεκεν Αἰσώπου

κατήλλαχθι αὐτοῖς

Stanley E. Porter holds that “In these two parallel accounts all examples of usage D, Aesop is depicted as a means of reconciliation ... using the phrase ἔνεκεν [τοῦ] Αἰσώπου.”⁴⁸ Usage D for Porter means that the “subject effects reconciliation by giving up its own anger against another party.”⁴⁹ Rather than a means ἔνεκεν expresses a reason or a cause (“because of, on account of”). We agree, however, with Porter that Aesop is asking the king to give up his own enmity and not just to see that a reconciled state come about.

In *Antiquitates Judaicae* VII 184 Flavius Josephus also uses an aorist passive imperative which the context proves to be reflexive, when relating the conflict between David and his son Absalom. The context speaks several times about David’s anger at Absalom (181-187). The imperative concerning reconciliation (τῷ σαντοῦ παιδί πρῶτον καταλλάγηθι), addressed to David by an old woman, is immediately followed by the explanation καὶ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὀργὴν ἄφες. The aorist passive imperative καταλλάγηθι is thus explained or illustrated as “let go of your anger against him.” Consequently καταλλάγηθι most likely means “reconcile yourself.”⁵⁰

Three passive forms of καταλλάσσω occur in 2 Maccabees, viz aorist passives in 1:5 and 8:29 and a future passive in 7:33. This latter verse speaks explicitly about the living Lord being angry for a little while and states: καὶ πάλιν καταλλαγῆσεται τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ δούλοις. If the passive forms of καταλλάσσω in 2 Maccabees have a passive sense, the question

⁴⁸ Porter, *Katallássō*, p. 46.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁰ This view is also held by Dupont, “La réconciliation,” p. 261 (“se réconcilier”). English translators opt for the passive “be reconciled.” See *Josephus* 5 (ed. H.S.J. Thackeray and R. Marcus, London/Cambridge MA 1958); and C. Begg, *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* 4, Leiden 2005, p. 257.

arises: Who is the primary agent? No primary agent is expressed. The prayers in 1:5 and the supplications in 8:29 can at best be secondary agents. If they were wrongly to be interpreted as primary agents, the verb forms would be passive and the text would be saying that by their prayers humans reconcile God to themselves. The fact that no agent is mentioned may, however, suggest that the verb forms are to be read as reflexive.⁵¹ The intercession would then be similar to Aesop interceding with the king and the old woman beseeching David in *Antiquitates Judaicae*. The difference is that in 2 Maccabees those interceding are not third parties (see above IM1), but are themselves involved in the conflict (see above IM3). The reflexive interpretation stresses that God (not humans) is the one who is the subject of reconciliation. Prayer and supplication (and maybe even suffering and death of the martyrs) are reminders for God, they are not the reconciling actions themselves.⁵²

By way of conclusion and as a preparation for the next section, we shall focus on the results of our investigation that are relevant for an analysis of 2 Cor. 5:20d. The first important result is the fact that our provisional criterion for the distinction between middle reflexive and passive forms has proved justified. The passive must thus be seen as emphasizing the result of the reconciling action, the state of reconciliation without being interested in the details of how it is achieved. The middle is more focused on the subject of the reflexive action, the offending party who is expected to make an end to enmity or anger. On the basis of this criterion we reached the conclusion that in Greek literature there are undeniably aorist passive forms of δι-/καταλλάσσω⁵³ which have a middle reflexive meaning. According to our analysis of their use

⁵¹ See Dupont, "La réconciliation," pp. 263-264: "L'idée n'est aucunement que Dieu 'serait réconcilié' par l'action des hommes, que les prières le rendraient réconcilié. Le contexte n'invite pas à entendre le verbe dans ce sens purement passif; il faut le comprendre au sens réfléchi. Les prières invitent Dieu à modifier ses dispositions, mais on sait qu'il ne les modifiera qu'en raison de sa miséricorde." *Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling* (2004) translates all the passive forms of καταλλάσσω in 2 Maccabees with reflexive forms. See also *Willibrordvertaling* (1995): "zich tegenover u genadig tonen" (1:5) and "zich verzoenen" in 7:33 and 8:29. The reflexive interpretation is also found in *Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible* and *Einheitsübersetzung*. English translations, however, render the passive forms of καταλλάσσω in 2 Maccabees as passives ("be reconciled").

⁵² In 4 Macc. 17:22 the death of the devout ones is seen as ἱλαστήριον.

⁵³ The result of our investigation confirms the view that διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω are used interchangeably in Greek texts. Both are used as true passives and as middle reflexives, both are used as imperatives as well as in other moods, and both occur in religious and interpersonal meanings. This more or less even distribution is all the more striking as we are not dealing with large numbers of occurrences.

in extra-Biblical literature the ratio is about 1:1. In the LXX we only identified reflexive cases, and in the NT besides 2 Cor. 5:20 we found only passive cases. In light of the religious use of καταλλάσσω in 2 Cor. 5:20 it might be interesting to note that we classified the religious uses of δι-/καταλλάσσω (Sophocles' *Ajax*, Plato's *Symposion*, 2 Macc. 1:5; 8:29) as middle reflexive.

In addition to 2 Cor. 5:20 we found five imperatives three of which we classified as passive (*BGU* III 846.10; 1 Cor. 7:11; Matt. 5:24) and two as middle reflexive (*Vita Aesopi* G 100; W 100; Jos., *Ant.* VII 184). While some verses that use imperatives of δι-/καταλλάσσω are strikingly similar in vocabulary to 2 Cor. 5:20 (cf. δέομαι in *Vita Aesopi* and παρακαλέω in *BGU* III 846.10), this Pauline verse nevertheless proved unique in important regards. It represents the only occurrence of the imperative within the religious use of δι-/καταλλάσσω. While in most instances the command is given by a third party, 2 Cor. 5:20b stresses that through Paul it is really God (ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν), the offended party, who addresses the command to the offending party, while in the papyrus letter *BGU* III 846.10 it is just the other way around.

3. The Meaning of καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ in 2 Cor. 5:20d

In the previous section it became clear that passive forms of καταλλάσσω can have both a passive and a reflexive meaning depending on the contexts in which they are used. This implies that when we interpret the passive form καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ in 2 Cor. 5:20 we cannot simply assume that the meaning is passive, but we have to study the context in order to examine whether a reflexive meaning might be preferable. 2 Cor. 5:20 reads as follows:

ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν
ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν
δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ
καταλλάγητε⁵⁴ τῷ θεῷ

When Paul and through him God beseeches the Corinthians in 5:20d: καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ, from the perspective of the grammar, this imper-

⁵⁴ In D* E G goth the alternative reading is καταλαγῆναι. The New Jerusalem Bible seems to follow this *varia lectio* when translating: "we appeal to you to be reconciled to God."

ative can be interpreted in three ways:⁵⁵ (1) Imperative passive with God as implied primary agent (divine passive): “be reconciled/let yourselves be reconciled to God [by God].” (2) Imperative passive meaning with “us apostles” as implied primary agent: “be reconciled/let yourselves be reconciled to God [by us apostles].” (3) imperative passive with a middle reflexive meaning: *πρεconcile yourselves to God.*”

In what follows we shall discuss the pros and cons of these three interpretations of 5:20d with the purpose of finding the most likely meaning.

a. *καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ* as a “Divine Passive”

The interpretation of 5:20d as a passive is the common opinion in modern research and in the great majority of modern versions. In the English-speaking world the translation is almost exclusively “be reconciled to God.”⁵⁶ The implicit assumption seems to be that the passive is a divine passive. Since this translation is usually assumed to be the only possible one, there are hardly ever any reasons given to support it. In our understanding the following arguments in favor of this position can be listed. First, the grammatical form of *καταλλάγητε* is an imperative passive. As is evident in Rom. 5:10, Paul does use the passive of *καταλλάσσω* in its actual sense. Passive forms and passive meaning of *καταλλάσσω* are also common in extra-Pauline Greek literature, as we have seen above. Second, 5:20d could easily be understood as the passive version of 5:19a:

5:19a θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ

5:20d καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ [ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ] (ἐν Χριστῷ)

cf. Rom. 5:10 κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ

Third, all the other instances of the soteriological use of *καταλλάσσω* in Paul clearly have God as the subject of reconciliation. If 2 Cor. 5:20d is not a divine passive it is a notable exception. The Deuteropauline reconciliation texts also have God and Christ respectively as subjects of the event of reconciliation, never human beings. As Thrall points out: “God and man are not seen by Paul as equal partners in the [reconciliation]

⁵⁵ See above, p. 14.

⁵⁶ Instead of this simple passive, other languages usually opt for a permissive passive: Dutch: “laat u met God verzoenen”; French: “laissez-vous réconcilier avec Dieu”; German: “lasst euch mit Gott versöhnen.”

process.”⁵⁷ The fourth and final argument is that God is the implied subject of ἐποίησεν in 5:21a which must be inferred from 5:20d. Therefore one would expect God also to be the agent in 5:20d.

However this widespread view is not without problems. If 5:20d is simply the passive version of 5:19a there is a contradiction since 5:19a states the reconciliation as a reality in the past, while 5:20d makes reconciliation the object of an imperative.⁵⁸ The only way to avoid this contradiction would be that καταλλάσσω has a slightly different meaning in both verses. 5:19a would then be talking about a general objective reconciliation, while 5:20d would refer to an individual subjective reconciliation. This, however, is an artificial distinction and there is nothing in the context to support it. What is called subjective reconciliation is already implied in 5:19a. Another possibility of explaining the slightly different meaning of καταλλάσσω in 5:19a and 5:20d is to consider 5:19a as a statement of the complete reconciliation event, while 5:20d is the acceptance or appropriation in one's own life. The latter could then be paraphrased as follows: “allow the reconciliation worked by God in the past to become a reality in your life now.” Some scholars assume a passive acceptance either by faith, by recognizing that God has reconciled us or by not putting obstacles to God's reconciling action. It is, however, questionable whether Paul would not rather have used an expression like καταλλαγήν λαμβάνω (cf. Rom. 5:11) and whether such a personal event as reconciliation does not require the active participation of both parties to become a reality. On the other hand there are scholars who defend an active meaning of the acceptance of reconciliation. Their position is practically identical with the reflexive interpretation of καταλλάγητε. The Dutch scholar Frederik Willem Grosheide defends a paradoxical mixture of active and passive

⁵⁷ Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 437.

⁵⁸ This has been noticed for a long time. See, e.g., E.H. van Leeuwen, “De Καταλλαγή,” *Theologische Studiën* 28 (1910), pp. 159-171, esp. 161: “Ware nu de verzoening der wereld met God inderdaad een voldongen feit, wat immers het geval zou zijn indien gezegd was: ‘God verzoende de wereld met zich’, dan ware het, om niet te zeggen ongerijmd, toch wel volstrekt overbodig, nog de bede en de vermaning er aan toe te voegen, ‘laat u verzoenen.’” Van Leeuwen does not solve the problem by suggesting a different understanding of 5:20d, but rather by insisting that 5:19a means “was reconciling” instead of “reconciled.” The world is not reconciled collectively, but “ieder mensch individueel kan verzoend worden als hij aanneemt of zich laat welgevallen Gods verzoenende daad in Christus” (p. 166).

aspects: "Even though people cannot convert themselves, still we have to convert ourselves. This is also the mystery of the καταλλάγητε."⁵⁹

b. καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ as "Being Reconciled to God by Paul or the Apostles"

The option to supply as the unexpressed agent "by us apostles" has to our knowledge not been defended in scholarly research.⁶⁰ Nevertheless it deserves to be investigated. The following arguments in favor of the position could be listed. First, in 5:18c, 19c Paul prepares 5:20d by both times mentioning the gift of the ministry of reconciliation together with the event of reconciliation. What does ἡ διακονία τῆς καταλλαγῆς mean? If the noun καταλλαγή is used in an active sense, Paul is talking about the ministry of the reconciling action. Then Paul has the ministry of a reconciler. Second, in 5:20a Paul uses the verb πρεσβεύω to describe his ministry of reconciliation in action. In profane Greek texts a third party peace negotiator was called πρεσβύς⁶¹ or διαλλακτής. Their task was not to proclaim an already realized reconciliation, but to move the conflicting or warring factions to reconcile to one another. Third, ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ is used twice in 5:20ac and seems to indicate that Paul takes the place of Christ in the reconciliation process (compare also δι' ἡμῶν in 5:20b with διὰ Χριστοῦ in 5:18b; cf. ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦν-τος in 5:20c and συνεργοῦντες in 6:1a).

Despite this impressive evidence in favor of seeing Paul as the implied agent in 5:20d, this position runs into serious problems. First, the meaning of καταλλαγή in the expression ἡ διακονία τῆς καταλλαγῆς can also be passive. In that case Paul is talking about the ministry of the result of God's reconciling action. Such a passive meaning coincides with the parallel expression ὁ λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς in 5:19c. ἡ διακο-

⁵⁹ F.W. Grosheide, *De Tweede Brief aan de Kerk te Korinthe*, Kampen ²1959, p. 172: "Al kan niemand zich zelf bekeren, wij moeten ons toch bekeren. Dit mysterie kunnen we nooit oplossen. Het is ook het mysterie van het καταλλάγητε."

⁶⁰ Judging by the title one could be inclined to see in the following work a defense of this view: J. Schröter, *Der versöhnte Versöhner. Paulus als unentbehrlicher Mittler im Heilsvorgang zwischen Gott und Gemeinde nach 2 Kor 2,14-7,4*, Tübingen/Basel 1993. He does, however, not go that far, as can be seen on p. 194: "Dabei ist es wichtig, daß nicht nur er selbst von Gott versöhnt wurde, sondern nun auch seinerseits mit der Herstellung von Versöhnung zwischen Gott und Menschen beauftragt ist. Diesen seinen Auftrag formuliert er in V.20c: καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ." Schröter does not give a detailed account of how this applies to our topic of discussion.

⁶¹ Cf. C. Breytenbach, *Versöhnung. Eine Studie zur paulinischen Soteriologie*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1989; A. Bash, *Ambassador for Christ*, Tübingen 1997, pp. 70-71.

νία τῆς καταλλαγῆς is the ministry which has as its content the reconciliation event on the cross.⁶² Second, even though Paul uses πρεσβεύω, he does not see his role as that of a reconciler or peace negotiator. Paul is not a third party who is not involved in the conflict or who is trying to move two conflicting parties to reconcile. As a human being Paul is also involved in the conflict. The conflict could be seen as only one-sided, since God is always already reconciled. God is the one who brings about the reconciliation, not Paul. Paul's ministry only begins when the reconciliation is already a reality. His role is described with the words διακονία, λόγος, παρακαλέω and δέομαι. He proclaims something that is already a reality. His role is exhorting and beseeching, not negotiating. In addition, according to 5:20c it is really God who is exhorting through Paul.

Third, the roles of Christ and Paul in the reconciliation process are not the same. ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ does indeed indicate that in his ministry Paul takes the place of Christ. But it is self-evident that this can only be a partial replacement. In 1 Cor. 1:13 Paul unmistakably states: μὴ Παῦλος ἐσταυρώθη ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. Thus the δι' ἡμῶν of 5:20b is not fully parallel in meaning with διὰ Χριστοῦ in 5:18b. Christ's death on the cross is the event in and through which God reconciled the world to himself. This mediating role of Christ as secondary agent by which he brought to immanent realization the designs of the transcendent God is complete. It cannot and need not be continued by the apostles. While the apostles like Christ are to live a life of serving instead of being served (cf. διακονία) and while they are to participate in the suffering of Christ by their own apostolic suffering, their role for the reconciliation is different from that of Christ. The apostles are not bringing about reconciliation, but they are to make present in their word and in their entire existence the reconciliation process of the past.⁶³ Neither Paul nor any of the apostles are actually reconcilers. In the authentic letters of Paul not even Christ can be called reconciler. It is only in Eph. 2:16 that Christ is presented as reconciler.

⁶² For a detailed discussion of this position see R. Bieringer, "Paul's Understanding of Diakonia in 2 Corinthians 5:18," in: R. Bieringer/J. Lambrecht (eds), *Studies in 2 Corinthians*, Leuven 1994, pp. 413-428, esp. 422-424.

⁶³ See R. Bieringer, "Paul's Understanding."

c. καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ as "Reconcile Yourselves to God"

In critical research the interpretation of καταλλάγητε in 2 Cor. 5:20d as middle reflexive with the translation "reconcile yourselves to God"⁶⁴ has not found much support. It has nevertheless been present in the exegetical discussion⁶⁵ and in some less known French and German Bible translations.⁶⁶ What can be put forward in favor of such an interpretation? First in extra-Biblical literature the middle reflexive interpretation of passive forms of διαλλάσσω and καταλλάσσω is at least as frequent as the passive interpretation. Second, the unusual way of presenting reconciliation in 5:18b, 19a as God reconciling us to himself⁶⁷ instead of the expected form of God reconciling himself to us suggests a reflexive meaning in 5:20d. X reconciling himself/herself to Y can be achieved without the active participation of Y. Even if Y remains irreconciled, X can realize reconciliation with Y for himself/herself. But X reconciling Y to him/herself is a process which can never be achieved without Y reconciling himself/herself to X. Strictly speaking the expression "X reconciles Y to himself/herself" is a brachylogy of "X moves Y to give up his/her enmity against X and creates the conditions of possibility for this." If X reconciles himself/herself to Y, nothing is said about X enabling Y to reconcile to X except for the example of initiating the reconciliation process. If, however, X reconciles Y to himself/herself, that seems to imply a more direct enabling of Y to reconcile to X.

Third, the idea of representation is present in the context in 5:14-15

⁶⁴ We need to take into consideration that this discussion is not only an issue of the interpretation of the source language but also of the receptor language. The fact that in Dutch, French and German translations the aorist passive forms of καταλλάσσω in Matt. 5:24 and 1 Cor. 7:11 are regularly rendered as reflexive forms, but never in English, is without doubt connected with the general tendency to avoid reflexives in the English language. The reflexive meaning comes to the fore without the use of a reflexive pronoun in the Knox Translation (1954) ("make your peace with God") and in Marshall, "The Meaning of Reconciliation," pp. 123-124 ("human putting away of enmity").

⁶⁵ L.I. Rückert, *Der zweite Brief Pauli an die Korinther*, Leipzig 1836-1837, p. 184; F. Büchsel, "ἀλλάσσω κτλ.," *ThWNT* 1 (1933), pp. 252-260, esp. 257 "versöhnt euch." Note that the English translation of this text in *TDNT* 1 (1964), pp. 252-259, esp. 256 uses the passive "Be ye reconciled." Also Dupont, "La réconciliation," p. 267: "Les sens moyen: 'se réconcilier paraît plus naturel'" and Spicq, *Notes*, p. 410.

⁶⁶ J. Kürzinger (ed.), *Das Neue Testament*, Aschaffenburg ³1954; *Le Nouveau Testament. Traduction nouvelle par E. Osty & J. Trinquet*, nouvelle édition revue et augmentée, Paris 1964 and *München Neues Testament. Studienübersetzung*, Düsseldorf 1988, ⁵1998.

⁶⁷ The only other extra-NT instance of the scheme: "X reconciles Y to him/herself" is found in Judg. 19:3 (interpersonal use).

and 17. In 5:15 Paul says: "And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them." Not living for oneself presupposes a participation which is no less than the participation which a reflexive interpretation of 5:20d would suggest. In both contexts it is clear that the human action is a response to Christ's and ultimately God's action. By dying for all, Christ enables human persons to live for Christ instead of for themselves. By reconciling the world to himself, God enables humans to reconcile themselves with God. Representation or inclusive vicarious action means that God does something for us by enabling us to do it ourselves. The same idea of participation is present in the expression ἐν Χριστῷ in 5:17 and 5:21 (ἐν αὐτῷ). If Paul dares to say that people who are in Christ, are a new creation (5:17), that in Christ they are becoming δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and that they work together with God, we should not be surprised that he can also say: reconcile yourselves to God.⁶⁸

Fourth, in 5:19b the way in which God achieved reconciliation is described as "not counting to them their trespasses" which means removing what caused the state of enmity. What does καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ mean in the light of this? Does it mean, "accept that God has removed what separated you from God"? What would such an acceptance imply? Or does it mean, "Remove on your part what separates you from God"? One might be inclined to say that this does not make sense since God has already removed it. But as the concept of inclusive vicarious action (i.e., representation) shows in 5:14-15, by creating conditions of possibility God (and Christ) do things for humanity in a way that humanity still has to do them. At the same time humans are enabled to do their share in the process.

Fifth, in 2 Cor. 5:18-20 reconciliation is not a change of emotions (cf. Judg. 19:3), but a change of what had objectively separated God and humanity. We are changed in the process. Paul says that we are a new creation (5:17) and that we become δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (5:21). "Reconcile yourselves to God" would then mean, "now that God has made you a new creation, and the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, you have to do your share of letting that become a reality for yourselves and of doing what God has enabled you to do as a new creation and as δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, namely to give up your enmity and your inimical behavior, stop trespassing, live not for yourselves but for Christ."

⁶⁸ See also Phil. 2:12: "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Sixth, καταλλάσσω/καταλλαγή is interpersonal, relational terminology which Paul used as a theologoumenon for the interpretation of the cross event. The use of such deeply personal terminology presupposes reciprocity which means that both parties are active. Büchsel states in his *TDNT* article: "It is often asked whether men [*sic*] are active or passive in reconciliation. The true answer is that they are made active."⁶⁹ He makes the link with the highly personal nature of καταλλάσσω/καταλλαγή. "In reconciliation, too, man [*sic*] is a person. It is only because he is a person, and consequently an active being, that there can be any reconciliation for him at all."⁷⁰

Seventh, καταλλάγητε in 5:20d is the first imperative in 2 Corinthians, a letter in which imperatives are comparatively infrequent.⁷¹ The second imperative is found in 6:13. πλατύνθητε is also an aorist passive with a reflexive meaning "open yourselves wide."⁷² The same idea is resumed in the verb χωρήσατε in 7:2. πλατύνθητε and χωρήσατε are the anthropological analogies to καταλλάγητε. The three imperatives are thus closely related. In his use of the aorist passive in 5:20d, Paul is not only interested in reconciliation as a result, as we saw is the case in 1 Cor. 7:11 and Matt. 5:24 also seems to be. In 2 Cor. 5:18-19 there is a strong emphasis on the fact that reconciliation is already a reality. After his theocentric statements in 5:18-19 Paul shifts the focus to the Corinthians in 5:20. As is clear from 5:14-21 and the structure of the entire letter, especially 6:11-13 and 7:2, Paul is mainly interested in reconciling action. This is more in keeping with a reflexive interpretation of 5:20d.⁷³

⁶⁹ Büchsel, "ἀλλάσσω κτλ.," p. 256.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁷¹ The only book of the New Testament which proportionately uses less imperatives is 1 John.

⁷² Many modern versions translate "open wide your hearts" even though the word heart is not present in the Greek text, thus avoiding the use of a reflexive pronoun.

⁷³ One could also point to Rom. 5:1 and 11 for support of our reflexive interpretation of 2 Cor. 5:20d. In Rom. 5:1 the best manuscripts read εἰρήνην ἔχωμεν. In recent exegesis there is a tendency to accept this variant. See, for instance, R. Jewett, *Romans. A Commentary*, Minneapolis 2007, pp. 344 and 348 who paraphrases the expression "let us make the necessary response and take advantage of his offer." In 5:11 Paul uses the unusual expression τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν. The verb λαμβάνω can both mean to get and to obtain. After the statement of God's initiative in 5:10 (κατηλλάγημεν and καταλλαγέντες), in 5:11 Paul stresses the human activity. τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν is not found elsewhere in reconciliation statements. It seems to be in analogy with καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ in 2 Cor. 5:20. The link is also made by Büchsel, "ἀλλάσσω κτλ.," p. 256: "We have received reconciliation, yet not as blows are received, but in such a way that God has besought us (2 Cor. 5:20). The activity of a man [*sic*] cannot be conceived of in any higher way than in terms of causing him to ask for the

Conclusion

In this study we propose an unusual interpretation of the imperative καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. Many readers will feel uncomfortable by our reflexive translation “reconcile yourselves to God,” because they are afraid that this overestimates what humans can do in their relationship with God. Many want to see the role of the human being as purely receptive and point to παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δεῖξασθαι ὑμᾶς in 6:1 for support. We should, however, not forget that we only need to fear a competition between God’s action and human action if we see God on the same level as human beings. If we rightly understand God’s activity on a totally different level than human activity, there is no danger of competition. It is possible to assume that the more active God is, the more active the human person can be. Moreover we stressed in our analysis that in 2 Cor. 5:14-21 as elsewhere Paul does not speak about human activity without having stated God’s initiative. We must not forget that, if human persons are active, they were enabled by God for such activity.

As we have seen in our investigation, it is not unusual that passive forms of καταλλάσσω (or διαλλάσσω) are used with a reflexive meaning. In texts like 1 Cor. 7:11 where nothing is at stake theologically, few hesitate to translate καταλλαγῆτω as a reflexive. From a purely linguistic view the passive or the reflexive meaning of καταλλάγητε in 5:20d are equally likely. Only an exegesis of the imperative in its immediate context can motivate a choice between the two possibilities. We opted for the reflexive meaning because we are convinced that it has the most support from the context. If Paul really meant καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ to mean “reconcile yourselves to God,” he employed a daring way of speaking about the relationship between humans and God. But the daring nature of his speaking already begins with applying the thoroughly interpersonal and reciprocal language of reconciliation to the divine-human relationship. To coin the imperative “reconcile yourselves to God” is only pushing this to its logical conclusion, the reciprocity in the relationship between God and human persons. This is equally present when the Bible uses friendship terminology for the divine-human relationship.

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THE NEW PREACHERS IN GALATIA.
THEIR IDENTITY, MESSAGE, AIMS, AND IMPACT

Martinus C. de Boer

In this essay in honor of Henk Jan de Jonge, a fellow laborer in the vineyard of New Testament Studies, I attempt to provide a historical sketch of the people Paul in his letter to “the churches of Galatia” (1:2) characterizes as “those unnerving you” (1:7) and as “those upsetting you” (5:12). What does Paul’s letter allow us to know about the identity of these people, their message, their aims, and their impact on the “Galatians” (3:1)?¹

1. *The Information to Be Gleaned from Gal. 1:6-9*

In the paragraph immediately after the letter's prescript (1:1-5), Paul indicates that he writes the letter in response to what he perceives to be a crisis:

I am astonished that you are so quickly turning from the one who called you into the grace of Christ² to a different gospel, which is not another, except that there are some who are unnerving you and wanting to turn

¹ For the scholarly debate, see in addition to the standard commentaries, in particular J.L. Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles," in: *id.*, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*, Edinburgh 1997, pp. 7-24; J.M.G. Barclay, *Obedying the Truth. A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians*, Edinburgh 1988, pp. 36-74; E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, Philadelphia 1983, pp. 17-29; F.F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems 3. The 'Other' Gospel," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 53 (1971), pp. 253-271; and other articles collected in M.D. Nanos (ed.), *The Galatians Debate. Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, Peabody 2002, and J.M.G. Barclay, "Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case," *JSNT* 31 (1987), pp. 73-93. The present article presupposes that the work known as "Paul's letter to the Galatians" is a real letter stemming from the middle of the first century CE, and not a fictive or a pseudonymous work from that period or later.

² Nestle-Aland²⁷ places Χριστοῦ, “of Christ,” in brackets since “the absence of any genitive qualifying ἐν χάριτι (ⲡ^{6vid} G H^{vid} it^{ar} Marcion ...) has the appearance of being the original reading, which copyists supplemented by adding Χριστοῦ” (B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Stuttgart ²1994, p. 520). The inclusion, however, has strong external support, including ⲡ^{6vid} a A B Y 33 81 614 1739 among others; furthermore D has Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, which is simply a variation on the simple Χριστοῦ (other, lesser manuscripts have θεοῦ, “of God”).

the gospel of Christ into its opposite. But even if we or an angel from heaven were preaching a gospel to you³ contrary to the one we did preach to you, let that preacher be an anathema. As we have said before and I now say again: if someone is preaching a gospel contrary to the one you received, let that preacher be an anathema. (Gal. 1:6-9)

In the first verse of this passage, Paul in effect rebukes the churches of Galatia for being in the process of turning (μετατίθεσθε, present tense)⁴ to "a different gospel" (ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον), i.e., a different version of the good news about Christ.⁵ This different gospel is attributed to certain people (τινες) who, according to Paul, "are (1) unnerving you (οἱ ταράσσοντες ὑμᾶς) and (2) wanting to turn the gospel of Christ into its opposite (θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ)." The two actions probably go together, the second serving to explain the first: Certain people are (in Paul's view) "unnerving"(ταράσσοντες)⁶ the Galatians precisely because they are

³ Nestle-Aland²⁷ places ὑμῖν, "to you," in brackets, since some manuscripts place the word before the verb, others after it. Still other manuscripts omit the word altogether. A decision is difficult. See Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, p. 521.

⁴ The verb μετατίθημι was commonly used in connection with changing allegiances, e.g. turning from one school of thought to another or from one religion to another; e.g., 2 Macc. 7:24; 11:24; see BDAG 642; C. Maurer, "μετατίθημι," *TDNT* VIII (1972), pp. 161-162; H.D. Betz, *Galatians. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Philadelphia 1979, p. 47 n. 41. Paul thus presents the process of turning to that different gospel by the Galatians as a form of apostasy (cf. 5:4), undoubtedly to alert the Galatians to the seriousness of the situation in which they find themselves.

⁵ Paul denies that this "different gospel" is in fact "another (ἄλλο) gospel" (1:7a). The two adjectives ἕτερος and ἄλλος are frequently used interchangeably to mean "(an)other," also by Paul; see E.D. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, Edinburgh 1921, pp. 420-422; J.K. Elliott, "The Use of ἕτερος in the New Testament," *ZNW* 60 (1969), pp. 140-141; BDF § 306; cf. 2 Cor. 11:4; 12:9-10. Here however a case can be made for a distinction; see Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, p. 24: The sense is that the "different gospel" cannot count as "another gospel" alongside the gospel Paul himself preached and still preaches. Anything other than "the gospel that was preached by me" (1:11) to the Galatians is not in fact "the gospel of Christ" (the good news of which Christ is the content). Paul's apparent "self-correction" in 1:7a is designed to rob the "different gospel" of the right to the label "gospel (of Christ)."

⁶ The verb ταράσσω (also used in 5:10, the only two instances in Paul's letters) has been rendered in different ways. Recognized possibilities include "disturb" (NAB; Betz, *Galatians*; J.D.G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, London 1993); "confuse" (NRSV, NIV); "trouble" (KJV, RSV); and "frighten (out of their wits)" (J.L. Martyn, *Galatians. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, New York 1997, p. 112). The verb literally means to "stir up" or to "trouble" as water (John 5:7). In its metaphorical extension, the general meaning is "to cause inward turmoil" (Martyn, *Galatians*, p. 111: "mental anguish") and thus to "stir up, disturb, unsettle, throw into confusion" (BDAG 990; cf. John 11:33; 12:27; 13:21; 14:1, 27). In

wanting “to turn into its opposite” (μεταστρέψαι)⁷ the gospel of Christ. Paul then anathematizes “someone” (τις) who “is preaching-a-gospel (εὐαγγελίζεται) contrary to the one (παρ’ ὃ) you received (παρελάβετε)” (1:9), which is “contrary to the one (παρ’ ὃ) we (i.e., Paul and his companions) did preach to you (εὐηγγελισάμεθα)” (1:8). From this passage and making allowances for Paul’s rhetorically and polemically motivated formulations, we may draw certain conclusions about the people supposedly “unnerving” the churches of Galatia:

(1) They have come into the Galatian churches from outside. Paul clearly distinguishes those unnerving the Galatians (τινες, “some”) from the Galatians themselves (“you”). This does not in itself mean that they are strangers to the cities or villages in which the Galatians themselves live. It does mean that they are not members of these churches.

(2) They have come on the scene after Paul had founded the churches of Galatia (4:13): Paul here anathematizes someone (τις)⁸ who “is [now] preaching-a-gospel” (εὐαγγελίζεται, pres. ind.) contrary to the one the Galatians “received” (παρελάβετε, aor. ind.), which is the one “we preached” (εὐηγγελισάμεθα, aor. ind.; cf. 1:11: τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ, “the gospel that was preached by me”; 4:13: εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, “I preached-the-gospel to you”).

(3) As the previous point already indicates, the people supposedly unnerving the Galatians are preaching what they themselves call “a

the Synoptics, the verb occurs only in the passive form and the NRSV consistently translates it with “be terrified” or “frightened” (Matt. 2:3; 4:16; Mark 6:50; Luke 1:12; 24:38). The translation “unnerve” seeks to encompass their various nuances.

⁷ A one-word translation of this verb, which is not used by Paul elsewhere, has proven difficult. The most common translation is “pervert” (RSV, NRSV, KJV, NIV, NAB, NJB; Betz, *Galatians*; R.N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Dallas 1990). Another alternative is “distort” (BDAG 641; B. Witherington, *Grace in Galatia. A Commentary on St Paul’s Letter to the Galatians*, Edinburgh 1998). A possible meaning of the verb is to change something so that it turns into its opposite (G. Bertram, “μεταστρέφω,” *TDNT* VII [1971], p. 729; BDAG 641). Sirach, for example, warns its readers against a certain type of person capable of “turning (μεταστρέφων) good into evil” (11:31), whereas Acts 2:20 cites the prophecy of Joel 2:31 (LXX 3:4) warning that “the sun shall be turned (μεταστραφήσεται) into darkness.” For this reason, Martyn renders the verb with “to change the gospel of Christ into its opposite,” which is also the translation adopted here. See further below for contextual factors in support of this rendering.

⁸ The singular is probably generic, though Paul may have a leader of the group in view. See below on 3:1; 5:7; 5:10b.

gospel” (εὐαγγέλιον). Paul would hardly want to call their message “gospel” unless they themselves are designating it as such.⁹

(4) Furthermore, it is “a different gospel” (ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον), i.e., different in kind from the one Paul preached to them. This gospel has to be considerably different from Paul’s own; Paul’s expressed consternation in this passage and his petition to let someone preaching that different gospel in Galatia be an anathema in God’s eyes would otherwise be difficult to explain.

From these four points, it is possible to conclude that the people Paul refers to in 1:6-9 were *Christian preachers who have come into the Galatian churches founded by Paul with a version of “the gospel of Christ” different from Paul’s own. We shall accordingly label them “the new preachers.”*¹⁰ Two further conclusions can, however, be drawn from 1:6-9:

(5) The new preachers are indeed “unnerving” the Galatians. Paul is not here simply vilifying the new preachers, i.e., making false and slanderous accusations. His Galatian readers are in a position to corroborate this charge about the impact of the new preachers on themselves. Paul has probably learned of the deleterious impact of the new preachers on the Galatians from sources loyal to him in the churches of Galatia. There is something about the gospel of the new preachers that the Galatians find to be truly unnerving. It is causing them considerable mental distress.

(6) The reason is that the new preachers are wanting to substitute their version of the gospel for Paul’s. Paul formulates their agenda in a polemical manner: they are “wanting to turn the gospel of Christ into its opposite.” Paul’s formulation entails a theological evaluation of their version of the gospel of Christ from the vantage point of his own understanding of that gospel. The gospel according to Paul is focused on “the grace of Christ” (cf. 1:15; 2:21) whereby the blessings of salvation are unconditionally given. By implication, the opposite of this gospel is one in which grace (as Paul understands it) plays no role and the blessings of salvation are made conditional. A con-

⁹ Martyn, *Galatians*, p. 109; *id.*, “Mission to Gentiles,” p. 13; *pace* M.D. Nanos, *The Irony of Galatians. Paul’s Letter in First-Century Context*, Minneapolis 2002, p. 142.

¹⁰ We could also call them “the new missionaries” or “the new evangelists.” Evangelist here means a preacher of the gospel (a message containing the good news about Christ), not the author of a Gospel (a book narrating the ministry and passion of Jesus as good news, such as the four canonical Gospels).

ditional gospel is one that in Paul's view turns the gospel of Christ on its head so that it can no longer be called "gospel"—it is no longer good news, the good news of Christ. The new preachers may well be arguing that it is actually Paul who has turned the gospel on its head and that they have come to set "the gospel of Christ" back on its feet. The new preachers probably then agree with Paul's implicit point, namely, that their gospel is *the diametrical opposite* of his. It is in any event highly probable that the new preachers want to replace Paul's (version of the) gospel of Christ with their own (version).¹¹

The six points above have been drawn exclusively from Gal. 1:6-9 (in addition to the prescript which explicitly names "the churches of Galatia")¹² without reference to the remainder of the letter, to which we may now turn for further information. In much of the remainder (apart from 1:11-2:14 and 5:13-6:10), Paul seeks to show on substantive theological grounds why the different gospel of the new preachers turns the gospel of Christ into its opposite and is thus not the (true and, in fact, only) gospel of Christ. In the process Paul reveals, both directly and indirectly, much about the new preachers and their "different" gospel. In this article, however, we confine ourselves to the verses in which Paul explicitly mentions the new preachers in order, as indicated at the beginning, to provide a basic historical sketch of their identity, message, aims and impact. We shall first briefly survey the relevant passages, interrogating them initially without reference to the contexts in which they occur and thus rather atomistically. In a subsequent step, we shall survey them again, this time with reference to the larger literary and argumentative contexts while also taking into account the other verses surveyed.

In providing a sketch of the new preachers we want to avoid two

¹¹ It is thus possible to describe the new preachers from Paul's point of view as "the opponents" (e.g., Betz, *Galatians*; Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*), an epithet they could agree with since they do want to replace Paul's gospel with their own in Galatia, or from the Galatians' point of view as "the agitators" (Barclay, *Obeying the Truth*; Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*) or (following our translation of οἱ ταράσσοντες in 1:7) "the unnervers." We here describe them, following the lead of Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission," p. 13, in terms of their primary activity: preachers who have recently come into the Galatian churches with a message they call "the gospel of Christ." Martyn himself prefers to call them "the Teachers."

¹² Given 3:1, where Paul addresses the readers with the ethnic designation "Galatians," these churches are probably to be located in the region of Galatia ("north Galatia"), from which the larger Roman province took its name. It is unlikely that Paul would address people living in the southern regions of the Roman province in this manner since the inhabitants were not (ethnically speaking) Galatians.

extremes. One extreme is to maintain that everything Paul says and writes about the new preachers is factual and unaffected by rhetorical or polemical aims. One of Paul's aims in this letter is to alienate the Galatians from the new preachers and their gospel. That Paul is not a neutral observer is obvious from Gal. 1:6-9, discussed above. The second extreme is to claim that everything Paul says about the new preachers in Galatia contains so much rhetorical and polemical distortion that no hard ("neutral") information about them can be gleaned from the text of Galatians. It is implausible, however, to maintain that Paul does not, at least in passing, pass on factual information about the new preachers. Paul is rhetorically constrained by the familiarity of his audience with the new preachers and their gospel. He cannot just make it all up as he goes and retain credibility with his intended audience. His words have to make contact with the experience and the knowledge of the Galatians if he is to accomplish his aims, i.e., if the letter is to serve as a vehicle of communication from him to the Galatians.

Beyond these two extremes, there is also a third option, to maintain that Paul misunderstands the situation in Galatia or has been misinformed about it.¹³ Hypotheses based on this option run the risk of claiming to understand the new preachers better than Paul or his informants, which is problematic since there is no other firsthand information about the situation in Galatia apart from Paul's own letter.¹⁴ Resort to this option commends itself only if the information Paul provides in his letter lacks both internal coherence and historical plausibility.

2. *The Information to Be Gleaned from the Remainder of the Letter*¹⁵

3:1 *O unthinking Galatians! Who has bewitched you (τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκαυεν), before whose eyes Jesus Christ was portrayed as crucified?*

The singular τίς (here the interrogative pronoun "who") is prob-

¹³ Cf. W. Schmithals, "The Heretics in Galatia," in: *id.*, *Paul and the Gnostics*, Nashville 1972, pp. 13-64; earlier version: "Die Häretiker im Galatien," *ZNW* 47 (1956), pp. 25-67.

¹⁴ Hypotheses of this sort may also be irrelevant for the interpretation of the letter: Paul in any event responds to the situation in Galatia as he perceives and presents that situation.

¹⁵ The exegetical justification for the translations and interpretations offered may be found in the various comments on the relevant passages in my forthcoming commentary.

ably generic, as is the τις (the indefinite pronoun “someone”) in 1:9, though Paul may perhaps have a leader of the new preachers in view. Paul characterizes the Galatians as “unthinking” (ἀνόητοι), because they have been “bewitched” by the new preachers. The language here is probably metaphorical and hyperbolic. Paul perceives that the Galatians have, as even we might say without thereby affirming a literalistic belief in magic or demons, “fallen under the spell” of the new preachers and their gospel. By turning from the one who called them to a different gospel they are no longer in their right minds in his view. Paul thus ruefully acknowledges that the different gospel comes across as a plausible and attractive alternative to his own, perhaps also that its proponents are effective, “spellbinding” preachers of this different gospel. Further to be noted is that Paul addresses his readers as “Galatians,” which he could scarcely do in this context if the new preachers were also native to the area. The new preachers are thus missionaries who come from outside the region of Galatia.

4:17 *They court you zealously but not in a good way; rather, they want to shut you out, that you may court them zealously.*

Paul’s comment on the new preachers, who remain unnamed and indeed unmentioned except as part of the verb ζηλοῦσιν (“they court zealously”), is clearly designed to discredit them. If we “de-rhetorize” Paul’s language,¹⁶ two observations may be pertinent about the new preachers and their gospel: (1) The new preachers take a serious interest in the Galatians and in their salvation. They have a gospel to preach and want the Galatians to know its benefits. They would not have come to the Galatian churches if that were not so. (2) According to Paul, the new preachers in Galatia “want to shut” the Galatians “out” if they do not accept their version of the gospel. The new preachers present themselves (so Paul) as gatekeepers, preventing entry into the realm of salvation and the benefits thereof unless their gospel is followed.

5:7 *You were running well. Who (τις) hindered you from being obedient to the truth?*

This verse begins a discrete literary unit that ends at vs. 12. Paul

¹⁶ L. Thurén, *Derethorizing Paul. A Dynamic Perspective on Pauline Theology and the Law*, Tübingen 2000.

mentions the new preachers explicitly three times.¹⁷ If we leave Paul's own views and rhetoric aside, this verse confirms that the new preachers are interlopers. The Galatians started out with Paul's (version of the) gospel; once on their way they were confronted with a different one.

5:10b *He who is unnerving you will bear his judgment, whoever he is.*

Paul uses the same verb (ταράσσω) that he used in 1:7: "those who are unnerving you." The singular is probably generic. Paul may, however, be referring to the leader of the group (see above on 1:9; 3:1; and 5:7).

5:12 *I wish that those who are upsetting you would castrate themselves!*

Important for our purposes here is the characterization of the new preachers as "those who are upsetting you" (οἱ ἀναστατοῦντες ὑμᾶς). The verb used is a virtual synonym of the one used in 1:7 and 5:10b and thus adds nothing new. The repeated attention paid to the negative impact of the new preachers on the Galatians (1:7; 5:10b, 12) is noteworthy, however.

6:12-13 *Those who are wanting to make a good showing in the flesh, these are putting pressure on you to practice circumcision, only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For not even those who practice circumcision themselves keep the Law but they are wanting you to practice circumcision, in order that they may boast in your flesh.*

These verses are clearly designed to put the new preachers in a bad light. Taking into account Paul's rhetorically and polemically motivated formulations, we may discern four items of hard information about the new preachers; all four concern the practice of circumcision.

(1) The new preachers (and the community/ies from which they originate) are identified as "those who practice circumcision," i.e., as "the circumcisers" (οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι).¹⁸ They are thus Jews as well

¹⁷ On the use of the singular τῆς, see above on 3:1.

¹⁸ I here assume that (1) the present tense (περιτεμνόμενοι) gives the correct reading (B A C

as Christians, since circumcision was the crucial identifying mark of Jews in the Greco-Roman world (cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* V 5 2: "they adopted circumcision to distinguish themselves from other peoples by this difference"; Josephus, *Ant.* I 192).¹⁹

(2) The circumcisers are concerned about "keeping (φυλάσσουν) the Law." (Paul insinuates that they do not practice what they preach). The Law in question is the Law given to Moses on Mt Sinai (cf. 3:17, 19; 4:25) and preserved in the Pentateuch where the command to practice circumcision originates (Gen. 17:9-14). Circumcision is thus part of something greater, the Mosaic Law.

(3) The circumcisers "are wanting you to practice circumcision" (θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι). They want the Galatians to practice circumcision despite the fact that they are already believers in Christ.

(4) "These (people) are putting pressure on you to practice circumcision" (οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι).²⁰ The new preachers are not satisfied merely with expressing what they desire the Galatians to do, leaving it up to them to follow their instructions as they see fit. They are also putting pressure on them to proceed to the practice of circumcision.²¹

Paul divulges this information in the closing passage of the epistle, a paragraph he has added in his own hand (6:11). It is the clearest indication of the identity of the new preachers and of their gospel. This gospel involves the practice of circumcision as an essential element; the practice of circumcision is in turn linked to "keeping the Law."²²

D etc.), not the perfect (περιτετημένον, "those who have been circumcised"), which also has good support (B etc.), and (2) that the verb here is probably to be construed not as a passive ("those who are being circumcised," "those who get themselves circumcised") but as a middle ("those practising circumcision"). Both the present and the perfect make good sense. For a similar translation of the participle, see H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater*, Göttingen 1971, p. 281: "οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι sind 'die im Zustand der Beschneidung Befindlichen' oder 'die die Beschneidung üben', ohne Reflexion darüber, dass die Gegner selbst schon beschnitten sind."

¹⁹ "Those who practice circumcision" could in theory refer to Gentile Christians in Galatia who had adopted the practice, but the context and syntax require that "those who practice circumcision" (6:13a) are also those who "are wanting you (the Galatians) to practice circumcision (περιτέμνεσθαι, pres. mid.)" (6:13b).

²⁰ For this reason, the new preachers have traditionally been labeled "Judaizers," though that is a misnomer, since the Greek verb "to Judaize," ἰουδαίζειν (used by Paul in Gal. 2:14) means "to live in a Jewish manner," not "to put pressure on others to live in Jewish manner." Gentile Galatians adopting circumcision could hence accurately be labeled Judaizers.

²¹ The nature of this pressure is not explained, but see on 4:17 below.

²² To what extent Paul's seemingly hyperbolic accusations in 6:12-13, namely, that the new

With the information gleaned from 6:12-13, the other passages in which the new preachers are mentioned fall into place and a relatively coherent picture of the new preachers, their identity, message, aims, and impact emerges. We survey the passages again, this time in reverse order and with attention also to the larger literary and argumentative context.

(5:12) Paul's wish that the new preachers upsetting the Galatians castrate themselves thinly disguises a reference to their aim of introducing the practice of circumcision in the Galatian churches (he recommends that they take the knife used for circumcision and go a step further). Indeed, Paul explicitly mentions circumcision in the previous verse. The new preachers have evidently told the Galatians that Paul himself "still preaches circumcision" (περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω), a charge he indignantly denies.

(5:10b) This half verse precedes Paul's reference to preaching circumcision in 5:11. The new preachers are "unnerving" the Galatians probably because they are telling them that they must practice circumcision (and thus that Paul's circumcision-free gospel is to be abandoned).

(5:7) The new preachers have placed an obstacle in the race the Galatians were running. That obstacle is circumcision. It cannot here

preachers want to make a good showing in the flesh, that they avoid persecution for the cross of Christ, and that their real goal is to boast in the Galatians' (circumcised) flesh, are based on observation or information he has received is difficult to judge (cf. Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 6, 314-317), especially in view of the charge that the new preachers also themselves do not keep the Law. As Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, p. 65, writes: "It is difficult to know what evidence Paul would have adduced if he had been pressed to support this statement." The motives and shortcomings Paul attributes to the new preachers are not really verifiable, may have been hidden from the Galatians prior to receiving the letter, and do not further clarify the new preachers' identity, message, aims, and impact in Galatia. Assuming that the three accusations listed above are not groundless, R. Jewett, "The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation," in: Nanos (ed.), *The Galatians Debate*, pp. 334-347, esp. pp. 341-342, hypothesizes that "Jewish Christians in Judea" wanted "to avert the suspicion that they were in communion with lawless Gentiles. It appears that the Judean Christians convinced themselves that circumcision of Gentile Christians would thwart Zealot reprisals ... The agitators' demand for circumcision ... was thus only in part motivated by the belief that it was essential for admission into the chosen people of Israel. Paul sarcastically noted that the agitators' zeal was influenced by the desire to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ. ... The nomistic Christians in Judea would have ample reason to boast if they could induce the Gentile churches to enter the ranks of the circumcised ... It was this hope of public recognition for their loyalty to the Torah which lay behind Paul's bitter words: 'they wish to put up a good show in the flesh' (6:12)." The evidence Jewett adduces in support of this line of interpretation is not strong.

be ignored that 5:7 comes on the heels of a passage in which Paul urgently points to the danger to which the new preachers have exposed the Galatians:

Look, I Paul say to you that whenever you practice circumcision (περιτέμνησθε, pres. mid. subj.), Christ will be of no benefit to you. I bear witness to everyone (παντί ἀνθρώπῳ) practicing circumcision (περιτεμνομένῳ, pres. mid. ptc.) that he (or she)²³ is bound to do the whole Law (ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι). You have been severed from Christ, you who are trying to be justified (δικαιοῦσθε)²⁴ in the Law; you have fallen away from grace. (Gal. 5:2-4)

It is clear that the crucial issue is “practicing circumcision.” Will the Galatians or will they not practice circumcision as the new preachers want them to? The information about the new preachers and their intentions divulged in 6:12-13 is here being presupposed. In 5:2-4, as in 6:13, Paul indirectly indicates that the new preachers presume a link between the practice of circumcision and the observance of “the (whole) Law” (“doing the Law” in 5:3 means essentially the same thing as “keeping the Law” in 6:13). The practice of circumcision, they are telling the Galatians, obligates the practitioner also “to do” (ποιῆσαι) the (remainder of the) Law.²⁵ For this reason, presumably,

²³ It may seem ridiculous to add “or she” here, since the circumcision in view involves the male sexual organ. But the issue is “practicing circumcision” and that is a community matter, one in which the women members would also have a say as mothers of infant (and older) sons who need to be presented for circumcision. As soon as the boys and the men in the Galatian churches allow themselves to be circumcised, the practice will become both a family and a community concern: Henceforth parents will together present their infant sons on the eighth day (Gen. 17:12) for the rite. Both parents, the mother as well as the father, will thereby acknowledge the importance of the rite for belonging to the Jewish community with its commitment to doing the Law. In that sense, they will all be “practising circumcision.”

²⁴ In Paul’s mouth, this verb is best translated “rectified”; see M.C. de Boer, “Paul’s Use and Interpretation of a Justification Tradition in Galatians 2.15-21,” *JSNT* 28 (2005), pp. 189-216; but here Paul is presenting the meaning the new preachers attach to the verb, which is the meaning adopted initially by the Galatians. The present tense here is conative.

²⁵ Gal. 5:3 seems at first sight to indicate that Paul is newly informing the Galatians about the link between the practice of circumcision and the observance of the whole (Mosaic) Law. In 6:13, however, Paul charges that “those who practice circumcision (the new preachers) do not themselves keep the Law,” which seems to imply that the new preachers believe circumcision and Law-observance to go hand in hand (in Paul’s view, they fail to live up to what they believe). In 5:3, Paul emphasizes the *whole* Law, to underscore the far-reaching consequences of beginning with circumcision. The new preachers probably believe that the practice of circumcision obligates the practitioners to do “the (undivided) Law” (just like the Christian Jews in Acts 15:5), but they do not present this obligation as a terrible burden as Paul now does (a “yoke of slavery” according to 5:1).

Paul in 4:21 characterizes the Galatians who are contemplating practicing circumcision as "those who are wanting to be under the Law." By embracing the gospel of the new preachers, the Galatians are "trying to be justified in (the sphere of) the Law." This descriptive comment is shared ground between Paul and the Galatians, i.e., the Galatians agree with this statement. The striving of the Galatians for justification almost certainly reflects the influence of the new preachers. For the new preachers, to begin practicing circumcision is to make a commitment "to do" the Mosaic Law, with the aim of "being justified (by God) in (the sphere of) the Law."

(4:17) Paul's comment comes after he has described his founding of the Galatian churches and the good relationship he had with them. The new preachers have disturbed this situation profoundly and threatened that relationship. According to Paul, they "want to shut [the Galatians] out." From this charge, it can reasonably be inferred that the new preachers are exerting considerable pressure on the Galatians to embrace their gospel, an inference confirmed by 6:12-13 (see above). On a theological level, the new preachers are probably exerting such pressure by telling the Galatians that apart from Law observance they are excluded from membership in God's people, the descendants of Abraham (cf. 3:7, 29). Without the Law, they are saying, the Galatians fall under the curse of Deut. 27:26 (3:10),²⁶ whereby they are effectively excluded from "the blessing of Abraham" (cf. 3:14). On a social level, the new preachers may be exerting such pressure by literally excluding the Galatians from their table fellowship, including the Lord's Supper (cf. 2:11-14).²⁷ The combination of theological and social exclusion would help to explain why the Galatians have become "unnerved" by the new preachers (1:7).²⁸

(3:1) The Galatians have fallen under the spell of the new preachers, even though Paul had proclaimed Christ crucified to them, which for him sums up "the gospel of Christ" (1:7). Paul poses a pertinent question to the unthinking Galatians in the following verse: "I wish to learn only one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit on the basis of works of the Law or on the basis of the message of faith?" The answer is as plain to the Galatians as it is to Paul: "works

²⁶ Cf. Martyn, *Galatians*, p. 30.

²⁷ Cf. Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, p. 59.

²⁸ The theological exclusion of the Galatians would of course reinforce the social exclusion, and vice versa.

of the Law," i.e., doing (the commandments of) the Law, had nothing to do with their reception of the Spirit (cf. 3:5). Circumcision is covered by the broader expression, "works of the Law" (cf. 2:16; 3:5, 10), since the next verse (3:3) contains a probable allusion to this fleshly rite: "Are you so unthinking, having begun with the Spirit are you now ending (ἐπιτελεῖσθε) with the flesh?" (cf. the use of the term "flesh" in 6:12-13 above; Gen. 17:9-14).²⁹ It is evident from the context that the new preachers are telling the Gentile Christians in Galatia that the reception of the Spirit is conditional upon doing the Law, beginning with circumcision.³⁰

It is but a short step back from 3:1-5 with its twofold mention of "works of the Law" to 2:15-16, where Paul claims that "we who are Jews by birth ... even we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified (rectified) on the basis of the faith of Christ and not on the basis of works of the Law." The new preachers, themselves Jews by birth, have surely come to believe in Christ Jesus, just as Paul, but they do not share Paul's view that a believer is justified (2:16), or receives the gift of the Spirit (3:2, 5), apart from "works of the Law." The practice of the rite of circumcision is thus part of a wider issue in Galatia, whether believing in Christ can and ought to be supplemented by the observance of the Law. The new preachers

²⁹ Cf. Sanders, *Paul*, p. 19. For Paul, the term "flesh" here may also be a reference to the fearsome cosmic power he calls "the Flesh" in 5:13-26, where that power stands opposed to the Spirit. Paul would then be implying that the Galatians, by taking up fleshly circumcision, shall leave the realm of the Spirit and end up in that of the Flesh.

³⁰ Given the rhetorical question in 3:3, it is for some interpreters conceivable "that Paul's missionary efforts were taken as merely the first step, and that the opponents claimed to provide the necessary and final measures to bring salvation to completion and perfection" (Betz, *Galatians*, p. 136). This line of interpretation takes the verb ἐπιτελεῖσθε to mean not "ending with" but "a perfecting or completing of what was already there" (Jewett, "The Agitators," p. 342). There are two significant problems with this line of interpretation: (1) It presupposes that the new preachers see no necessary link between the gift or reception of the Spirit and the observance of the Law (their position would then be: the Galatians already have the Spirit; they now also need the Law). The rhetorical question in vs. 2 presupposes, however, that the new preachers see the former to be entirely dependent on the latter. (2) It implies that Paul acknowledges circumcision to produce or lead to the perfection promised by the new preachers. One way to avoid this implication is to regard the question as ironic, even sarcastic (Martyn *Galatians*, p. 289, among others). This is possible, but the other rendering of the verb in question ("ending with," as the complement to "beginning with"; cf. Phil. 1:6; 2 Cor. 8:6) is more plausible, since the question is then straightforward and makes very good sense: The Galatians started off on the right road, they are now in danger of ending up at the wrong destination. See also Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, pp. 39, 49.

are convinced that believing in Christ can be, in fact must be, combined with doing the Law.

To support their case, the new preachers are probably appealing to the Scripture of the Jews, in particular to Gen. 17:9-14 where God requires Abraham and his descendants to keep his covenant with them by practicing male circumcision. From vs. 10 the passage is directed to the descendants of Abraham among whom the new preachers surely count themselves. The second person pronoun "you" changes almost imperceptibly from singular to plural forms in that verse (the plural forms have been italicized in the translation below):³¹

And God said to Abraham: You shall keep my covenant, you and your seed after you for their generations. And this is the covenant which you shall keep between me and *you*, and between your seed after you for their generations: every male of *you* shall be circumcised. And *you* shall be circumcised in the flesh of *your* foreskin, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between me and *you*. And a child of eight days shall be circumcised by *you*. Every male throughout *your* generations ... shall be surely circumcised, ... and my covenant shall be on *your* flesh for an everlasting covenant. And an uncircumcised male who shall not be circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin on the eighth day, that person shall be utterly destroyed from his nation, for he has rejected my covenant.

That the new preachers appeal to Gen. 17:9-14 and the covenant of circumcision with Abraham can be deduced from the fact that in a long section of the letter (3:6-29) Paul addresses a crucial question: Who are the true offspring of Abraham? The answer of the new preachers was: those who practice circumcision, thereby obligating themselves to do "the (remaining) works of the Law" (3:2, 5, 10).³²

³¹ The new preachers are probably quoting the LXX to the Greek-speaking Galatians (as Paul does in the letter). Hence the following translation is based on the LXX text.

³² See Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, pp. 54-56, for other texts, many closer to the time of Paul, as unambiguous as Gen. 17:9-14 itself is. "Armed with such unambiguous texts," Barclay writes (p. 53), "the agitators could readily demonstrate that, to share in the Abrahamic covenant and the Abrahamic blessing (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; etc.), the Galatians needed to be circumcised; indeed such was the command of God in their Scriptures."

3. *The Historical Plausibility of the Information Gleaned from Galatians*

Is the information gleaned from the text of Galatians about the new preachers and the importance they attach to circumcision historically plausible? The search for an answer to that question demands that we survey texts that seem to provide parallels to this information.

A partial parallel to the Galatian situation is provided by the story of Izates, king of Adiabene, told by the Jewish historian Josephus whose life and career overlapped with those of Paul.³³ Izates contemplates being circumcised and becoming a Jew but hesitates to take this step. He is even told by a Jew named Ananias that he could worship the God of Israel without being circumcised. But he was subsequently challenged by another Jew named Eleazar to do what the Law commanded:

For when he [Eleazar] came to him [Izates] to pay him his respects and found him reading the law of Moses, he said: "In your ignorance, O king, you are guilty of the greatest offence against the law and thereby against God. For you ought not merely to read the law but also, and even more, to do (ποιεῖν)³⁴ what is commanded in it. How long will you continue to be uncircumcised? If you have not yet read the law concerning this matter [presumably Gen. 17:9-14 is in view], read it now, so that you may know what an impiety it is you commit." (*Ant.* XX 44-45; translation L.H. Feldman)

Izates subsequently agrees to take the required step.

More pertinent perhaps, if somewhat later, is the *Dialogue with Trypho* of Justin Martyr.³⁵ When Justin, a Gentile, has told Trypho, a Jew, of his conversion to Christ, Trypho tells him that this means nothing unless he becomes circumcised and then commits himself to observing the Law: "If, then, you are willing to listen to me ..., first (πρῶτον) be circumcised (περιτεμοῦ), then observe what ordinances have been enacted with respect to the Sabbath, and the feasts, and the new moons of God; and, in a word, do all things which have been

³³ Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, pp. 55-56.

³⁴ On the use of this verb in connection with the (works of) the Law, see Gal. 3:10, 12: 5:3 ("to do the Law").

³⁵ C.H. Talbert, "Paul, Judaism, and the Revisionists," *CBQ* 63 (2001), pp. 1-22, esp. 5.

written in the Law: and then perhaps you shall obtain mercy from God" (*Dial.* 8; translation *ANF* 198-199).³⁶

The dialogue partner of Justin is a Jew, not a Christian Jew, however. Is there evidence outside of Galatians for Christian Jews with an approach to Gentiles similar to that of the new preachers in Galatia? Acts, whose account often contradicts or deviates from that found in Paul's own letters, confirms the plausibility of the picture drawn in Galatians. According to Acts 15:1, "some people came down from Judea [to Antioch] and were teaching the brethren, 'unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved'" (RSV). This turn of events eventually leads to the so-called Apostolic Council (15:6-22) in Jerusalem at which Paul and Barnabas also take part. At the conclusion of this meeting, "the apostles and elders" in Jerusalem write an official letter to the church in Antioch, and in that letter they report that "some persons from us have unnerved you (ἐτάραξαν ὑμᾶς) with words, unsettling your minds ..." (15:24, RSV, modified). The verb used here is *ταράσσω*, "unnerve," the verb Paul uses in Gal. 1:7 and 5:10b. The situation presupposed in Acts 15 is analogous to the one presupposed in Gal. 1:7 and 5:10b: Some persons (τινες) have come into the church in Antioch from elsewhere (Jerusalem) and "have unnerved" (*ταράσσω*) the Gentile members with the message that they must practice circumcision in order to be saved. Accepting Jesus as Messiah is not enough. Furthermore, before the meeting actually gets underway, certain believers (described as coming from the Pharisaic party) make their position plain to both the delegation from Antioch and the leaders of the Jerusalem church: "It is necessary (1) to circumcise them [Gentile believers] and (2) to charge them to keep the Law of Moses" (15:5). The presupposed connection between circumcision and the keeping of the (remainder of the) Law is also presupposed in Gal. 5:3 and 6:13.

There are other passages in Acts that indicate a mission to Gentiles without requiring circumcision and Law-observance caused resistance among Christian Jews in Judea (10:1-11:18, esp. 10:28, 45-47; 11:2-3, 18), particularly in connection with the work of Paul (21:20-22). Noteworthy are two passages: (1) Acts 11:44-45 recounts

³⁶ Cf. Jas 2:10; 4 Macc. 5:20-21; 1QS 1 13-18; *m. Abot* 2:1; 4:2; more texts in Longenecker, *Galatians*, p. 227.

the amazement of circumcised believers that Gentiles receive the gift of the Spirit simply by "hearing the word," i.e., the message about Christ (as in Gal. 3:2, 5); circumcision and Law-observance do not enter into the equation, much to their surprise (11:17-18). (2) Acts 21:20 refers to Christian Jews who are "all zealous for the Law" (21:20) and who have heard that Paul has been teaching "all the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs" (RSV). The author of Acts himself wants to allay this charge and, as the letter to the Galatians shows, Paul was telling Jews no such thing; rather, he was telling *Gentiles* that they did not need to circumcise or observe the Law. Acts in any event preserves a tradition about Christian Jews zealous for the Law who were also extremely suspicious of Paul, of his views on the Law in connection with his missionary activities among the Gentiles. Paul himself in the letter to the Galatians points to the resistance of certain Christian Jews in Jerusalem (he labels them "false brethren") to his circumcision-free gospel and his missionary efforts among Gentiles (2:4).³⁷

In the case of the Galatian churches, to be sure, we are dealing with what appears to be an active mission to Gentiles by Christian Jews with a gospel different from Paul's beyond the bounds of Judea,³⁸ something of which Acts seems to know little or nothing (cf. Acts 8:1-40; 11:19-26). In Acts, the opponents of Paul in the cities of the Greco-Roman world are Jews, not Christian Jews. In this striking difference, the information contained in Paul's letters must be given priority, since these letters represent the primary evidence for the course of events in the fifties of the first century.³⁹ Paul's letter to the Philippians and his second to the Corinthians also indicate that there were Christian-Jewish missionaries who resisted Paul's efforts among the Gentiles in other places, although it is not certain that the Christian-Jewish missionaries in Galatia, Philippi and Corinth all had

³⁷ The later Pseudo-Clementine literature (containing *The Ascents of James* and *The Preachings of Peter*) preserves a fierce polemic against Paul by Christian Jews. For the relevant texts, see Betz, *Galatians*, pp. 331-333; for discussion and application, see Martyn, *Galatians*, pp. 117-126; *id.*, "A Law-Observant Mission."

³⁸ Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission."

³⁹ Where the information of Acts pertaining to Paul's missionary activities and travels diverges from that found in the letters of Paul, the latter must always be given priority. Acts can be used only to confirm information derived from Paul's letters, not to disconfirm such information. See J. Knox, *Chapters in a Life of Paul*, rev. ed., London 1989, p. 19.

the same views about the relation between the observance of the Law (or circumcision) and believing in Christ.⁴⁰ Paul's picture of the new preachers contains some distinctive features but the picture nevertheless remains historically plausible.

Conclusion

The survey and analysis of the primary evidence, passages in Galatians in which Paul explicitly mentions the new preachers (sections 1 and 2), and of some parallel texts (section 3), indicate that the information that Paul divulges about the new preachers is internally coherent and historically plausible. That information allows us to give the following brief sketch of the new preachers, their identity, message, aims, and impact.

(1) *Their identity.* The new preachers are Christian Jews who preach the gospel to Gentiles.⁴¹ They are missionaries who have come from elsewhere. Where are they from? That is difficult to say with any certainty, though Gal. 1:11-2:14 indicates that they probably have some relation to the church in Jerusalem (cf. 4:21-31) and believe themselves to represent its views concerning a mission to the Gentiles.⁴²

⁴⁰ 2 Cor. 11:4 does bear some striking similarities to Gal. 1:6-9; 3:1-5: "For if someone comes and preaches another Jesus (ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν) than the one we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel (εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον) from the one you accepted, you submit to it readily enough" (NRSV). See also 2 Cor. 11:22-23: "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham (cf. Gal. 3:6-9, 29)? So am I. Are they servants of Christ?—I am a better one ..." (NRSV). See Phil. 3:2, with its word-play allusion to circumcision (περιτομή) and those (Christian Jews) who promote the practice: "Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate (κατατομή) the flesh."

⁴¹ They are Christian Jews, not Jewish Christians (for the distinction, see Martyn, "A Law-Observant Mission"). Christian Jews and Jewish Christians have in common that they were both born into the Jewish community and its religion. For Christian Jews, however, circumcision remains of central importance (Gal. 5:2-3; 6:12-13) whereas for Jewish Christians, such as Paul, it has become a matter of indifference (see Gal. 5:6, 6:15).

⁴² The evidence surveyed here lends no support to the theories that those unnerving the Galatians were Gnostics (Schmithals, "The Heretics in Galatia"), a group of Paul's own Gentile converts (J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, Richmond 1959, pp. 87-90), or local synagogue Jews (A.E. Harvey, "The Opposition to Paul," in: F.L. Cross [ed.], *Studia Evangelica* 4, Berlin 1968, pp. 319-332; N. Walter, "Paulus und die Gegner des Christusevangeliums in Galatien," in: A. Vanhoye [ed.], *L'Apôtre Paul: Personnalité, style, et conception du ministère*, Leuven 1986; Nanos, *Irony of Galatians*; W.O. Walker, "Does the 'We' in Gal 2.1-17

(2) *Their message.* The new preachers are proclaiming what they regard as the gospel. For the Gentile Christians in Galatia, this gospel amounts to the following: "You believe in Christ, fine, but you must now also observe the Law, beginning with the rite of circumcision."⁴³ In normal circumstances, in their own mission to Gentiles who have not (in their view) been misled by Paul, the new preachers probably reverse the order of Christ and the Law: "First observe the Law, beginning with the rite of circumcision, and you may then also believe in Messiah Jesus." The assumption behind both summaries of their gospel is that a Gentile must first be incorporated into the people of Israel in order to receive the benefits of salvation made available through Christ.⁴⁴ Christ is here subordinate to the Law, rather than (as for Paul) the other way around.⁴⁵ The benefits of salvation for the new preachers can be summed up with the word "justification," a cornerstone of their gospel (2:16, 21; 3:6, 8; 5:4).⁴⁶

(3) *Their aims.* The new preachers in Galatia want the Galatians to begin practicing circumcision and then to observe the Mosaic Law, whereby they will have become members of the people of Israel. That aim also involves another: to substitute their (version of the)

Include Paul's Opponents?", *NTS* 49 [2003], pp. 560-565), or that there was a double front in Galatians (W.L. Lütgert, *Gesetz und Geist: Eine Untersuchung zur Vorgeschichte des Galaterbriefes*, Gütersloh 1919; J.H. Ropes, *The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians*, Cambridge MA, 1929). For these theories, see especially the surveys provided by Bruce, "Galatian Problems"; and Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*.

⁴³ This conclusion has a long history. Already in the second-century, the "Marcionite Prologue" to the letter to the Galatians (preserved in Latin translations of the original Greek) gives a similar assessment: "The Galatians are Greeks. They at first received the word of truth from the apostle, but after his departure they were tempted by false apostles to turn to the law and circumcision" (quoted from Bruce, "Galatian Problems," p. 254). But see next note.

⁴⁴ For this reason, the new preachers are not content with merely completing Paul's gospel, but with replacing it (see on 1:6-9 in section 1 and n. 30 above). In their view, the Galatians cannot obtain the benefits of faith in Christ apart from the observance of the Law.

⁴⁵ Martyn, *Galatians*, p. 17, appropriately writes that "the Law is itself both the foundation and the essence of their good news" (13), and that the new preachers (as we call them) "view God's Christ in the light of God's Law, rather than the Law in the light of Christ," while avoiding "every suggestion that God's Law and God's Christ could be even partially in conflict with one another." Jesus is thus "the Messiah of the Law, deriving his identity from the fact that he confirms—and perhaps even normatively interprets—the Law."

⁴⁶ Missing from the parallel texts cited above in support of the plausibility of Paul's picture of the new preachers and their gospel is the theme of justification/righteousness. See on this de Boer, "Paul's Use and Interpretation of a Justification Tradition," and the analysis of 2:16 there given.

gospel for Paul's. In order to accomplish the latter, they also seek to discredit Paul and his apostleship (1:1-2:10).

(4) *Their impact.* The new preachers are effective missionaries, since the Galatians are in the process of embracing their gospel (1:6; 3:1; 4:10, 21). The Galatians have evidently fallen under their spell (3:1), which may explain why the Galatians would even consider taking up the practice of circumcision, no small step for an adult man especially in antiquity (no anesthesia, the high risk of infection, social derision).⁴⁷ To induce them to take this crucial step, the new preachers are telling the Galatians that unless they begin practicing circumcision they remain excluded from God's people. Exclusion from God's people means that they cannot partake of Christ's benefits, cannot receive the promised justification.⁴⁸ In their gospel, justification is thus entirely conditional on doing the Law. By putting considerable pressure on the Galatians to begin the practice of circumcision and to observe the (remaining commandments of the) Law, the new preachers have succeeded in deeply "unnerving" (1:6; 5:10b) and "upsetting" (5:12) the Galatians.

⁴⁷ See Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, pp. 46-47. on the disdain the practice elicited among Greco-Roman writers, though S.M. Elliott, *Cutting Too Close For Comfort: Paul's Letter to the Galatians in its Anatolian Context*, London 2003, thinks the attitude was different in the region of Galatia.

⁴⁸ Barclay, *Obedying the Truth*, pp. 52-72, gives a thoughtful discussion of the theological and social factors that could have played a role in the new preachers' attempts to make the Galatians conform. See also C.E. Arnold, "I am astonished that you are so quickly turning away" (Gal 1.6): Paul and Anatolian Folk Belief," *NTS* 51 (2005), pp. 429-449 who argues that certain local religious practices and traditions would have made the Galatians susceptible to the message of the new preachers in Galatia.

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ACTS 9:1-25.
NARRATIVE HISTORY BASED ON THE LETTERS OF PAUL

Rieuwerd Buitenwerf

What idea was meant to be expressed in the words “Christ appeared to me”? In answering this question one ... must leave out of consideration Luke’s accounts of the appearance of the risen Christ to Paul on the road to Damascus. These are Lucan expansions in narrative form of a few sober remarks which Paul himself makes in his letters.¹

This quotation embodies Henk Jan de Jonge’s critical attitude towards the historical value of the Book of Acts. The subject recurred every now and then in his teaching. De Jonge always warned his students against uncritical use of Acts when dating Paul’s letters and when reconstructing the earliest history of the Church. His teaching on this and other subjects has inspired me to study the New Testament in its historical context, and by way of this article I would like to express my gratitude to him for everything he has taught me.

There is a broad scholarly consensus that as historiography, Acts is not very reliable. Its main characters, Peter and Paul, for instance, are used by the author as vehicles for his own theological message.² There is also a broad consensus that the author used different kinds of literary patterns and motifs to shape and structure his book.³ As to the genre and the purpose of Acts, however, there is less agreement.

¹ H.J. de Jonge, “Visionary Experience and the Historical Origins of Christianity,” in: R. Bieringer *et al.* (eds), *Resurrection in the New Testament. Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, Leuven 2002, pp. 35-54, esp. 43.

² See, e.g., E.R. Goodenough, “The Perspective of Acts,” in: L.E. Keck/J.L. Martyn (eds), *Studies in Luke-Acts. Essays presented in honor of Paul Schubert* (Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale University, Nashville 1966, pp. 51-59; G. Lüdemann, *Paulus, der Heidenapostel 1. Studien zur Chronologie* Göttingen 1980, pp. 32-45; C.K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles 1*, Edinburgh 1994, pp. 49-51; A.J. Blasi, *Making Charisma. The Social Construction of Paul’s Public Image*, New Brunswick 1991, pp. 85-88.

³ One example is the use of speech as a vehicle for putting forward certain ideas, a well-known literary technique in ancient historiography; see, e.g., M. Dibelius, “Die Reden der Apostelgeschichte und die antike Geschichtsschreibung,” in: *id.*, *Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte*, Göttingen 1951, pp. 120-162; D.E. Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*, Pennsylvania 1987, pp. 124-128.

The book contains too many miracle stories and divine interventions to be considered ancient historiography, but on the other hand it contains too many facts and details to be a novel.

However, one of the ancient subgenres in historiography does seem to come close to that of Acts. Authors writing in this genre, which is sometimes called "mimetic historiography," tried to "recreate" history on the basis of facts.⁴ One of their purposes was to stimulate the reader's feelings. In mimetic historiography, the balance between historical fact on the one hand and exaggeration and fiction on the other was a delicate one. Miracles and divine interventions could be part of the stories. Modern readers would not consider this type of book historically sound, but in certain circles in antiquity it was an accepted form of historiography. The Book of Acts may represent a popular form of this genre.⁵ The author interpreted the facts and rumours about his main characters that he knew and recreated their history as it could have happened. In the case of Acts this is history with a mainly theological message.⁶ The miracles, divine interventions and exaggerations that link and interpret the facts, support the message the author wants to convey.

If this is correct, the author of Acts must have been looking for information about his main characters and the events he wanted to describe, in order to have a basis for his story. Since Paul is one of the main characters in Acts, facts about the life of Paul must have been one of the objects of his search. The Book of Acts and Paul's letters are the only first-century sources about Paul that we have. In the nineteenth century, many historical-critical exegetes took the dependence of the Book of Acts on the letters for granted.⁷ From the twentieth century onwards, the *communis opinio* on the relation between Acts and Paul has been that the author of Acts had no direct

⁴ See, e.g., E. Plümacher, "Τερατεία. Fiktion und Wunder in der hellenistisch-römischen Geschichtsschreibung und in der Apostelgeschichte," *ZNW* 89 (1998), pp. 66-90. See also E. Plümacher, "Die Apostelgeschichte als historische Monographie," in: J. Kremer (ed.), *Les Actes des Apôtres. Traditions, rédaction, théologie*, Leuven 1979, pp. 457-466; L. Alexander, "Fact, Fiction and the Genre of Acts," *NTS* 44 (1998), pp. 380-399. According to G.W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History. Nero to Julian*, Berkeley 1994, pp. 138-140, Acts bears all the marks of the ancient novel in which the past is rewritten and in which fiction is presented as history.

⁵ See Plümacher, "Τερατεία." Alexander, "Fact, Fiction and the Genre of Acts," pp. 394-399, concludes that Acts even moves beyond the boundaries of existing Greek historiography.

⁶ See Plümacher, "Τερατεία," p. 87.

⁷ See M. Enslin, "Once Again, Luke and Paul," *ZNW* 61 (1970), pp. 253-271, esp. 254.

access to the Pauline letters. Recently, however, some scholars have challenged this consensus.⁸ R. Pervo, for instance, provides an interesting overview of possible interdependencies between Acts and the Pauline letters in his *Dating Acts*.⁹ Although only few passages are discussed in detail, the cumulative evidence in his book strongly supports the thesis that the author of Acts must have known and used the letters of Paul.

Most present-day scholars, however, emphasize the differences between Paul's letters and Acts: for instance, the fact that Acts contains much more information about Paul than we can find in his letters, and the striking detail that Acts never actually states that Paul wrote letters.¹⁰ These differences lead most scholars to assume that the author of Acts knew local oral traditions about Paul and perhaps some written accounts, but that he did not know the Pauline letters. In this article, I hope to demonstrate that the letters of Paul should not be overlooked as one of the sources of the book of Acts. If we follow the *communis opinio* and date the book at the end of the first century, this means that it was written in a period when the letters of Paul were already circulating; they were copied and imitated; in other words, they were known in many Christian communities.¹¹ It is probable that an author looking for information about Paul not only heard local stories about the apostle, but was also pointed to the letters written by the apostle himself. It is even possible that the author of Acts

⁸ Against this *communis opinio*, e.g., Enslin, "Once Again, Luke and Paul"; W.O. Walker, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus Reconsidered," *JSNT* 24 (1985), pp. 3-23; L. Aejmelaeus, *Die Rezeption der Paulusbriefe in der Miletrede (Apg 20:18-35)*, Helsinki 1987; Blasi, *Making Charisma*, esp. pp. 39-73; F. Refoulé, "Le discours de Pierre à l'assemblée de Jérusalem," *RB* 100 (1993), pp. 239-251; H. Leppä, *Luke's Critical Use of Galatians*, Helsinki 2002 (unpublished dissertation); R.I. Pervo, *Dating Acts. Between the Evangelists and the Apologists*, Santa Rosa 2006, esp. pp. 51-147.

⁹ Pervo, *Dating Acts*, pp. 139-143.

¹⁰ This argument was, for instance, recently used again in a lecture by D. Marguerat at the SNTS (soon to be published in *New Testament Studies*); see also J. Knox, "Acts and the Pauline Letter Corpus," in: L.E. Keck/J.L. Martyn, *Studies in Luke-Acts. Essays presented in honor of Paul Schubert Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale University*, Nashville 1966, pp. 279-287, esp. 284-285. Proposed explanations for this problem may be found in, e.g., Enslin, "Once Again, Luke and Acts," pp. 268-271; Walker, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus Reconsidered," pp. 6-7; Pervo, *Dating Acts*, pp. 52-55.

¹¹ See also *1 Clement* 47; *2 Pet.* 3:15-16; cf. H.W. Hollander, "De canoniseren van de echte en onechte brieven van Paulus," in: K.D. Jenner/G.A. Wiegers (eds), *Heilig boek en religieus gezag. Ontstaan en functioneren van canonieke tradities*, Kampen 1998, pp. 164-183, esp. 171-173.

belonged to a Christian community which itself possessed copies of the letters. It is, therefore, probable that the author of Acts had the opportunity to read or hear the letters of Paul and use information from them, especially biographical information, in his own book.

In this article, we will compare Acts 9:1-25 with Paul's letters, most notably Galatians and 1 and 2 Corinthians. The genre in which the author of Acts was writing allowed authors to make the most of the facts and details found in the sources. By using literary patterns and motifs and by moulding the facts into a story, the author of Acts reshaped history in such a way that it could pass on the message he wanted to convey. Therefore, we will first look at the literary pattern he used; after that, we will study the details in the story, and compare these with the Pauline letters and with the literary motifs in the Book of Acts as a whole. The focus in this article will be on the first version of the story of Paul's calling (Acts 9:1-25); this text will be compared with the other two versions (Acts 22:3-21; 26:9-20) only when necessary.

1. *Acts 9 as a Story of Punishment and Repentance*

In this section we will discuss the literary pattern of punishment and repentance, of which Acts 9 appears to be an example. Usually, Acts 9 is considered a conversion story.¹² However, in an early Jewish or Christian context, conversion (μετάνοια) implied repentance, desiring forgiveness of sins. In the eyes of the early Christians, Saul's persecution of the Church was a sin for which repentance was needed. Therefore, Acts 9:1-19a may be interpreted as a story in which Saul is disciplined by God.¹³ He is punished for his misdeeds, but is given

¹² See, e.g., the headings in most Bible translations.

¹³ See also H. Windisch, "Die Christusepiphany vor Damaskus (Act 9, 22 und 26) und ihre religionsgeschichtlichen Parallelen," *ZNW* 31 (1932), pp. 1-23; W. Nestle, "Legenden vom Tod der Gottesverächter," in: *id.*, *Griechische Studien. Untersuchungen zur Religion, Dichtung und Philosophie der Griechen*, Stuttgart 1948 (Aalen 1968), pp. 567-596, esp. 590-593; H.W. Hollander, "De bekering van Paulus," *NTT* 56 (2002), pp. 27-47, esp. 30-31. A related interpretation is found in: C. Burchard, *Der dreizehnte Zeuge. Traditions- und kompositionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Lukas' Darstellung der Frühzeit des Paulus*, Göttingen 1970, pp. 88-105; see also K. Löning, *Die Saulustradition in der Apostelgeschichte*, Münster 1973, pp. 64-70, 120-125. Others absolutely reject the idea that Saul is punished, for instance because the word "punishment" is not used. See e.g., R. Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte 1*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986, pp. 300-301, 304-305.

a chance to discover that he is sinning against God and that he has to start a new way of life.

The motif of divine punishment intended to give the victim insight into his sinful behaviour is found in many Old Testament stories. The idea behind them is that God tries to correct the behaviour of sinners (including believers) by chastising them.¹⁴ In some later stories containing the same motif more attention is paid to the miraculous character of the punishment. In Dan. 4:24-34, for instance, king Nebuchadnezzar, after boasting about his power and capabilities, is transformed into an animal and remains so for seven years. Another example is found in 2 Maccabees 3. According to that story, Heliodorus tries to enter the Jewish temple to steal its treasures, but is stopped by divine creatures who show him who is really in control of the world.¹⁵ From that moment onwards, he respects the power of God.

Acts 9 also fits this pattern. First, Saul's activities against the Christians are mentioned (9:1-2). The author has chosen his words carefully: Saul is portrayed as a vigorous persecutor of Christians.¹⁶ The image of Saul as someone showing no mercy towards any Christian has already been prepared by casual remarks in Acts 7:58, 60 and 8:3. The author wants to make sure that no reader sympathizing with his point of view on Christianity could deny that Saul was acting wrongly and that he posed a huge threat to the dissemination of the message about Christ. Through the Christophany on his way to Damascus and the accompanying punishment (9:3-9) Saul learns that his deeds go against God's will. He sees a light from heaven and hears a voice. Saul is thrown to the ground and is struck blind.¹⁷ In 9:10-16, the Lord (i.e., Jesus) instructs Ananias about Saul. Again, Saul's evil deeds against the Christians are mentioned (9:13-14), but the Lord assures Ananias that Saul is now an instrument in his hand. He will proclaim the Gospel among both Gentiles and Jews and will even be suffering for the sake of Jesus. After three days of fasting—a sign that Saul accepts that he is a sinner—he is cured and baptized by

¹⁴ See e.g. Ps. 38:2-5; Prov. 3:11-12; 15:10; Jer. 2:30; Tob. 13:5; 2 Macc. 7:33; Heb. 12:5-7.

¹⁵ Cf. 3 Macc. 2:20-24; 4 Macc. 4:10-14 (which may be dependent on 2 Maccabees 3).

¹⁶ In 26:4-11 this image is emphasized even more.

¹⁷ The details of the Christophany differ in the three versions: according to 9:7, both Saul and his traveling companions hear Jesus' voice, whereas 22:9 explicitly denies that the companions heard it.

Ananias (9:17-19b).¹⁸ The second version of the story in Acts confirms this interpretation, when Paul's baptism is explicitly connected with repentance: "Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away" (22:16).

Scholars who reject the idea that Saul is punished in this story usually state that Saul's condition after the revelation is not serious enough to be considered a punishment. Three examples may suffice to counter this argument. In Homer, *Iliad* VI 130-140, Lycurgos is punished with blindness by Zeus; in Tob. 3:5, Tobit considers his blindness a punishment for his sins, and in 2 Macc. 3:27, "deep darkness" comes over Heliodorus, a metaphor for blindness.¹⁹ A more important question, however, is whether the severity of the punishment is the basis on which to determine the presence of this literary motif. Although *Joseph and Aseneth* 14, for instance, does not contain any description of physical punishment, the motif of a frightening supernatural appearance intended to change the life of Aseneth is clearly present. This motif is related to that of punishment and repentance. In other words, it is difficult to draw the line in this matter.

We may conclude that in Acts 9:1-19a the pattern of divine punishment for a sinner and his repentance is present. As a literary creation it resembles stories such as Dan. 3:31-4:34 and especially 2 Maccabees 3. There is no reason to assume literary dependency between Acts 9 and the punishment stories mentioned before, but the similarities show that author of Acts certainly knew the pattern and was able to create a story based on it. The main questions that need to be answered now are: how much information did the author of Acts need to be able to write this story about Paul's punishment and repentance, and why did he choose this particular literary pattern rather than another?

¹⁸ See Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* 1, p. 305.

¹⁹ See, e.g., J.T. Nelis, *II Makkabeeën uit de grondtekst vertaald en uitgelegd*, Bussum 1975, p. 104.

2. Acts 9 and Paul's Letters

The most striking Pauline parallel to Acts 9:1-19a is found in Gal. 1:11-17, where Paul is defending himself against the Galatians and tries to prove that he has received the gospel he preaches from God himself.²⁰ A first indication for the interdependence of the passages from Acts and Galatians is their structure. H. Leppä shows that the sequence of events in Galatians 1-2 is largely parallel to that in Acts.²¹

Paul, the persecutor	Acts 9:1-2	Gal. 1:13-14
Paul's conversion	Acts 9:3-19a	Gal. 1:15-17a
Paul's preaching in Damascus/Arabia	Acts 9:19b-20	Gal. 1:17b
Rumours about Paul	Acts 9:21	not present
Paul's escape from Damascus	Acts 9:23-25	2 Cor. 11:32-33 (not in Galatians)
Paul's visit to Jerusalem	Acts 9:26-29	Gal. 1:18-20
Paul goes to Syria and Cilicia/Tarsus	Acts 9:30	Gal. 1:21
Rumours about Paul	Not present	Gal. 1:22-24
Long period of silence	Acts 9:31-11:24	Gal. 2:1a

We will now track the course of the story in Acts 9, and compare it with the information found in Paul's letters, especially Galatians.

a. Acts 9:1-2

The opening of the story is presented in Acts 9:1-2. These verses contain the motive for Saul's punishment recounted in 9:3-9: Saul is portrayed as a zealous persecutor of Christians. In Gal. 1:13-14, comparable information is found. Paul is elaborating on his claim that he received the gospel directly from God and speaks about his zeal on behalf of Judaism before he became a follower of Jesus Christ. He emphasizes his former enthusiasm for the Jewish religion in order to stress that he knows more about Judaism than the Galatians do; apparently, the Galatians were interested in Judaizing forms of Chris-

²⁰ See, e.g., Lüdemann, *Paulus der Heidenapostel* 1, pp. 58-60; Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography*, pp. 125-130; J.D.G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, London 1993, pp. 14-15.

²¹ Leppä, *Luke's Critical Use of Galatians*, pp. 62-66.

tianity. In his letter, Paul tries to emphasize his teaching that it is not necessary for non-Jewish Christians to comply with Mosaic law.²² Paul also mentions his persecution of the Church as one of the features of his earlier life in Judaism and emphasizes the force of it: he “savagely persecuted the Church” (διώκω καθ’ ὑπερβολήν) and tried to “destroy it” (πορθέω).²³

The literary character of Acts 9:1-2 is clear from the beginning. The expression ἐμπνέων ἀπειλῆς καὶ φόβου is one of the indications: this way of intensifying a term is a stylistic figure widely used in the Hellenistic period.²⁴ The harsh statement that both men and women are to be taken captive is another literary motif, emphasizing Saul’s ruthlessness.²⁵ Acts 9:1-2 is the author’s literary adaptation of the image of Paul as a persecutor of the Church, an image found in Gal. 1:13-14 (and in Phil. 3:5-6 and 1 Cor. 15:8-10).

Let us now look at the way the author of Acts has worked the facts he knew into a proper story. In Acts 9, Jesus appears to Saul near Damascus. In Galatians 1, Paul himself also implies that his calling took place in Damascus. In Gal. 1:17, after mentioning his calling by God, he emphasizes that he did not consult the apostles in Jerusalem in order to receive insight into the gospel. He tells the Galatians that he went to Arabia, and returned (ὑποστρέφω) to Damascus afterwards. Obviously, Paul mentions his return to Damascus to let the Galatians know that he did not go to Jerusalem immediately after God called him. Nevertheless, the use of the word ὑποστρέφω implies that Paul had been in Damascus just before he went to Arabia. Therefore, the conclusion seems inevitable that Paul experienced his calling in Damascus.

According to Acts, Saul lived in Jerusalem before his calling. In his letters, however, Paul does not explicitly say where he lived. He certainly does not mention Jerusalem as his residence, even when this could have been profitable, for instance when he discusses his zeal on behalf of Judaism. In fact, Gal. 1:22-23 seems to exclude the possibility that Paul had persecuted Christians in Jerusalem and its surroundings. What, then, made the author of Acts think that Paul lived

²² Cf. Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography*, pp. 136-176.

²³ Cf. Phil. 3:5-6 and 1 Cor. 15:8-10.

²⁴ P.W. van der Horst, “The Hellenistic Background of Acts 9:1,” in: *id.*, *Jews and Christians in their Graeco-Roman Context*, Tübingen 2006, pp. 167-175.

²⁵ Cf., e.g., 1 Sam. 15:3; 2 Chr. 36:17; Jer. 6:11; 51:22; Acts 8:3.

there? In the type of historiography this author was writing it was not unusual to draw far-reaching conclusions from source materials. The aim was to recreate history as it could have happened. Paul himself emphasizes that before his calling he zealously observed Jewish law. Within contemporary Judaism Jerusalem and its temple were the most important symbols of the Jewish religion.²⁶ Therefore, Jerusalem is the most suitable residence for a person who is very much at home in Jewish habits but whose background is unknown. Moreover, since the earliest church resided in Jerusalem, Paul's own statements about his persecution of the Church may have provided the author of Acts with another clue. Thus, Saul's residence in Jerusalem may be considered a fictional element in the story which is nevertheless based on information from the letters.²⁷ This interpretation is corroborated by 22:3 and 26:4-5, where the author explicitly makes the connection between Paul's former zeal on behalf of Judaism and his residence in Jerusalem.

Once the author had concluded that Saul had lived in Jerusalem, he also knew from Gal. 1:13-14 and other passages that Paul had persecuted Christians there (see Acts 7:58 and 8:1-3). Since the author also knew that Paul was called in Damascus, he had to have him travel from Jerusalem to Damascus at the beginning of Acts 9.²⁸ The author cleverly uses Saul's travel from Jerusalem to Damascus to highlight the intensity of the sins he commits just before he is put on the right track by Jesus: Saul even travelled as far as Damascus to persecute Christians.²⁹ In Acts 9 Saul's zeal in taking Christians prisoner justifies the corrective punishment he receives later in the story. Obviously, the author had to make this unexpected twist in the story plausible. To that purpose he introduces the mandate Saul receives from the High Priest. The Jewish leaders accept Saul's offer to go to Damascus and take Christians captive. This historically rather unlikely event is skilfully reintroduced in 22:5: when Paul is taken prisoner, he is given the opportunity to defend himself before the

²⁶ See even Paul himself, in Gal. 4:25.

²⁷ Cf. Enslin, "Once again, Luke and Paul," p. 264; Pervo, *Dating Acts*, pp. 100-101. R. Jewett, *Dating Paul's Life*, London 1979, pp. 8-10, maintains that the author of Acts had a theological reason "for presenting a Jerusalem-centered picture of the activities of Paul" (p. 9).

²⁸ Cf. Enslin, "Once Again, Luke and Paul," p. 264.

²⁹ Acts 26:9-18 corroborates this interpretation, there the author has Paul explicitly state that his activities outside Judea showed his extraordinary anger against the Christians: "and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities" (26:11).

Jews in Jerusalem. In his speech, he calls the High Priest and the council as witnesses that he persecuted the Christians, since they had given him permission to take Christians captive in Damascus. The connection between the two stories in Acts again underlines the literary character of the book.

We may conclude that there is no need to postulate another source for Acts 9:1-2 than Paul's letters. The major items can all be deduced from Galatians 1: Paul's persecution of Christians, Damascus as location for God's intervention, and the reason for Paul's stay in Damascus. For the author of Acts, it was important to show how sinfully Saul behaved towards the Christians in order to make plausible that he was stopped by divine intervention.

b. *Acts 9:3-9*

In 9:3-9 the divine apparition and Saul's punishment are described: Jesus Christ reveals himself to Saul. As we will see, it is again possible to interpret the passage as a narrative elaboration of pieces of information contained in the letters of Paul.

Both in Gal. 1:12 and in 1:15-16 Paul mentions his call to become an apostle of Jesus Christ. In 1:12 Paul claims that he received the gospel δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. This may be translated as "through a revelation of/by/about Jesus Christ."³⁰ In 1:15-16 Paul speaks about the moment God called him. He states that God had already chosen him to work among the Gentiles earlier, and that at a certain moment, it pleased God to reveal Jesus "to" or "in" Paul.³¹ As in 1:12, Paul focuses on the divine origin of the gospel he preaches. He does not elaborate on the way he received his calling, but tries to make clear that it was God himself who made him realize that he should change his life and become one of Jesus' followers.³²

The author of Acts was able to use Paul's rather unspecific information about his calling as a basis for his story. He shaped this into the literary pattern of punishment and repentance in order to develop a narrative plot. A divine appearance was a common ingredient of

³⁰ Cf. e.g., F. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, Freiburg 2002, pp. 64-70; Dunn, *Galatians*, pp. 53-54.

³¹ The combination of ἀποκαλύπτω with ἐν can mean both "to reveal to" and "to reveal in." Cf. Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, pp. 83-88; Dunn, *Galatians*, p. 64.

³² See Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, pp. 69-70, 83-88.

punishment and repentance stories. Therefore, the way Jesus appears to Paul in Acts 9 is not unexpected. Interestingly, in Acts 9:17 the author has Ananias use traditional early Christian terminology to refer to the appearance described in 9:3-9: Ἰησοῦς ὁ ὀφθεῖς σοι ("Jesus, who appeared to you"). This is also the terminology used by Paul himself in his first letter to the Corinthians. In 1 Cor. 9:1, Paul states: "Have I not seen (ὀράω) Jesus the Lord?" This refers to some sort of experience (perhaps a dream, or an interpretation of a strange natural phenomenon).³³ In 1 Cor. 15:8-10 Paul also mentions this experience ("Christ appeared also to me," ὤφθη καὶ μοί). He hastens to add that he is in fact unworthy to be an apostle, since he persecuted "the Church of God." He maintains that it was only by God's favour that Christ appeared to him and that he was able to become an apostle. The terminology used in 1 Cor. 15:5-8 is not Pauline; the terms are traditional phrases indicating the appearances of Christ after his death.³⁴ Although 1 Cor. 15:8-10 does not contain as many details as Gal. 1:11-17, it refers to the same experience.

Both in Gal. 1:11-17 and in 1 Cor. 15:8-10, the combination of Paul's sinful past and a change of life initiated by a revelation or appearance of Jesus is already present.³⁵ In both passages Paul appears to be ashamed of his past. He states that he was only able to become an apostle by God's favour (χάρις), implying that severe punishment would in fact have been the only reaction to be expected. This information may help us to understand why the author of Acts chose to use the literary motif of punishment and repentance to narrate this event, since from the information contained in Galatians 1 and 1 Corinthians 15 it is only a small step to the concept of a divine intervention by which Paul is set on the right track.

The author interprets Paul's references to Jesus' appearance as a frightening experience, very different from the way he describes Jesus' appearances to, for instance, the disciples (Luke 24, Acts 1:1-14) and Paul himself (Acts 22:17-21). This is not to say, however, that this type of intervention was not familiar to the original readers. In

³³ See De Jonge, "Visionary Experience," pp. 44-45, who mentions six possible meanings of "appearance."

³⁴ On the traditional nature of this use of ὤφθη, see De Jonge, "Visionary Experience," pp. 39-41.

³⁵ Cf. H.W. Hollander/G.E. van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself an Abortion: 1 Cor. 15:8 within the Context of 1 Cor. 15:8-10," *NovT* 38 (1996), pp. 224-236.

9:3 we are told about blinding light and a voice (from heaven), in literature often vehicles for divine appearances.³⁶ The reaction (Saul falls to the ground) is also stereotypic.³⁷ At that moment in the story it is not yet clear who the god appearing to Saul is; in 9:5, the voice reveals that it is Jesus. The use of a double invocation is another indication of the literary character of the story,³⁸ and the dialogue between Jesus and Saul is comparable to, for instance, Gen. 22:1-2; 31:11-13; 46:2-4 and *Joseph and Aseneth* 14.³⁹

In Acts 9, Jesus does not instruct Saul himself. He directs him to the city and announces that somebody there will give him further instructions. An intermediary is often part of this type of story, although not indispensable.⁴⁰ In Acts 9:6, Jesus announces that someone will tell Saul what to do (he is not mentioned by name yet, but the passive form λαληθήσεται implies that there will be an agent). Moreover, this person (Ananias) will be the one who baptizes Saul.⁴¹

Saul's travelling companions hear what happens, but see nothing. This is also a common element in punishment and repentance stories: the people surrounding the victim experience something, but not everything. In 2 Macc. 3:24-27, for instance, the guards see the horse and its rider threatening to trample Heliodorus. They are deeply impressed, but not injured: they are still able to carry Heliodorus out of the temple. In Acts 9, Saul is struck blind and is taken to Damascus by his companions. In both stories, their literary function is to provide evidence to the reader that the event really did take place, and was not merely imagined by the person at the heart of it.⁴²

³⁶ See, e.g., Euripides, *Bacchae* 1078-1085; Virgil, *Aeneid* IX 107-117; Exodus 3; 19-20; *Joseph and Aseneth* 14; *T. Job* 3:1.

³⁷ See, e.g., Ezek. 1:28; 43:3; 44:4; Dan. 8:17; 10:9; *Jos. As.* 14:3, 10; *T. Job* 3:4.

³⁸ See, e.g., Gen. 46:2; Exod. 3:4; 2 Kgs 2:12; Isa. 29:1; *Jub.* 18:1, 10; 2 *Bar.* 22:2; *Jos. As.* 14:6; *T. Job* 3:1; 24:1; 25:9; Luke 6:46; 8:24; 10:41; 22:31.

³⁹ See also G. Lohfink, "Eine alttestamentliche Darstellungsform für Gotteserscheinungen in den Damaskusberichten (Apg 9; 22; 26)," *BZ* 9 (1965), pp. 246-257; G. Lohfink, *Paulus vor Damaskus*, Stuttgart 1966, pp. 53-60.

⁴⁰ In Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar's dream is the forecast of what will happen, and Daniel's explanation functions as the clarification by an intermediary before the punishment actually takes place. In 2 Macc. 3:33-34, the young men from heaven who punished Heliodorus also explain to him what has happened and why. In 4 Macc. 4:8-14 there is no intermediary. Apollonius is chastised by angels and understands that he is being punished for his sins.

⁴¹ From Acts 26:9-18 we may conclude that the author of Acts did not attach that much importance to the intermediary, since Ananias is not mentioned there.

⁴² Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* I, p. 304.

As with the first section, we may conclude that there is no reason to assume that the author of Acts used another source for this passage than the letters of Paul. All elements here are also found in the letters. The literary motifs and patterns the author knew helped him to organize the information from the letters into a proper story.

c. Acts 9:10-19a

In Acts 9:10 the Lord (i.e., Jesus) appears in a vision to a “disciple in Damascus called Ananias” (according to 22:12, Ananias was a “devout man to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews living there”). In 9:11-12 Jesus orders Ananias to go to the “street called Straight (εὐθεῖα),” to the house of a certain Judas. He also tells Ananias that Saul has had a vision in which Ananias was announced.

Four details from 9:10-12 are usually considered traditional elements: the names of Ananias, Judas, the “street called Straight” and Paul’s connection with Tarsus. G. Lüdemann, for instance, states that there is little evidence that the episode in 9:10-19a is historically reliable, but he also maintains that the existence of a disciple named Ananias is probably a traditional element; why would Luke invent this exact name for a “good” character when it is also used in 5:1-11 and 23:2 for persons portrayed negatively? The author of Acts furthermore gave the story some Damascene flavour, and invented the rest on the basis of elements already mentioned in 9:3-9.⁴³ Lüdemann also presupposes a traditional basis for the name of Ananias in Acts 5:1-11.⁴⁴

If the author of Acts purposely shaped the information about Paul’s calling into a story of punishment and repentance, the presence of an intermediary can easily be explained as part of this literary form, as in the preceding section. I believe there are some literary advantages in including an intermediary in the story. The most important of these is that Ananias’ vision functions as a divine confirmation of Jesus’ appearance to Saul on the road to Damascus. Not one, but two revelations of Jesus accompany Saul’s transition to the

⁴³ G. Lüdemann, *Das frühe Christentum nach den Traditionen der Apostelgeschichte. Ein Kommentar*, Göttingen 1987, pp. 118-121; Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* 1, p. 301, also maintains that the details about Damascus need not necessarily be based on memories of Damascene Christians.

⁴⁴ Lüdemann, *Das frühe Christentum*, pp. 70-71.

Christian faith. A second advantage is that the presence of the intermediary enables the author again to emphasize the force of Saul's persecutions of the Church. Ananias reminds Jesus of the danger represented by Saul, and Jesus answers that this dangerous Saul has now become his instrument. Convinced by this vision, Ananias goes to Saul and baptizes him. A third advantage is that the intermediary helps the reader to understand how the vigorous persecutor of the Church was accepted by the Christians: Jesus himself helped them to accept Saul.⁴⁵

The literary character of the passage is also apparent from Ananias' reaction. Like many Old Testament prophets, Ananias objects that it is far too dangerous to comply with the wishes of the Lord.⁴⁶ He states that he has heard what had happened in Jerusalem, a reference to the events mentioned in 8:1b-3 and 9:1. Moreover, he has heard that Saul had a mandate of the High Priests to come to Damascus to persecute Christians in the city. This information was imparted to the reader in 9:2, but even if the story was historically correct it is rather unlikely that the particular news about the mandate had already reached Damascus. It does, however, perfectly suit Ananias' expression of fear: if his vision proves to be false, he will be arrested by Saul and transported to Jerusalem, without any opportunity for legal defence.

The presence of the intermediary and the episode of 9:10-19a as a whole can, therefore, be considered literary inventions fitting the plot of the story. This means that the names of Judas, the "street called Straight" and Ananias were added to the story by the author of Acts. This observation does not, however, solve the problem of the sources of these names.

It is important to note that none of these three details is very specific. The names of Judas and Ananias are both among the ten most popular Jewish names at the time.⁴⁷ If the author had wanted to give characters Jewish names, he could easily have thought of Judas and

⁴⁵ In Acts 9:26-27 the reaction of the Jerusalem church is comparable to that of Ananias.

⁴⁶ On the motif of prophets trying to dismiss a divine call, see Hollander and Van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself an Abortion," pp. 234-236.

⁴⁷ See T. Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity Part I. Palestine 330 BCE-200 CE*, Tübingen 2002. On the list of most popular Jewish names, Judah (= Judas) is third (see pp. 56, 112-125) and Hananiah (= Ananias) is seventh (pp. 56, 103-108). In Josephus, for instance, more than ten persons called Judas are found and nine persons called Ananias. In the New Testament eight persons called Judas are mentioned.

Ananias. Similar observations can be made with regard to the location of Paul's address, the "street called Straight." Most scholars maintain that the "street called Straight" is a reference to the main road in Damascus, the *decumanus*, which ran from East to West.⁴⁸ This street name is also attested in other cities; Pausanias, for instance, mentions the "street called Straight" in his description of Megara in Greece.⁴⁹ It may, therefore, be enough to postulate that, since various cities had a "street called Straight," the author could easily have invented the "house of Judas at the street called Straight." This of course does not prove that the author of Acts really invented the names for this occasion. It is also possible that he included names he knew from oral tradition. Perhaps he knew about a leader of a Christian community called Ananias and decided to include him in this particular story. Perhaps he knew that the Damascus *decumanus* was called "Straight." Whether the author invented the names or already knew them remains a subject for speculation; in any case, he was the one who included them in this story.

There is one other detail in Acts 9:10-19a which should be mentioned. According to 9:11, Saul is called Ταρσεύς, "born in Tarsus."⁵⁰ In the story of Acts 9 this is an identifier for Saul, but has no explicit function in the development of the plot. Later in Acts it is implicitly connected with Paul's Roman citizenship (see 22:3, 28). In Acts, both elements, Paul's Tarsian descent and his Roman citizenship, become important links in the move of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome, for instance when Paul is given the opportunity to appeal to a higher court because of his Roman background (23:27, 34). It is clear that Paul's birth in Tarsus and his Roman citizenship play an important literary role in Acts, but does that mean that the author of Acts has invented Paul's connection with Tarsus? In my opinion that is not probable; it is far more likely that the author has decided to include this traditional element and to build a storyline on it.

In 9:15-16, Jesus convinces Ananias that it is safe for him to visit Saul. He tells him that Saul is "a chosen instrument" to bring his name before "nations and kings and before the sons of Israel." The

⁴⁸ See, e.g., G. Schneider, *Apostelgeschichte 9,1-28,31*, Freiburg 2002, p. 28; Barrett, *Acts*, p. 453.

⁴⁹ Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1 44:2: "As you go down from the market-place you see on the right of the street called Straight (ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ εὐθεῖα καλουμένη)."

⁵⁰ Acts 22:3 shows that this is the meaning of Ταρσεύς in the book.

combination of ἔθνη and βασιλεῖς (9:15) is a biblical expression for the "other" nations, the Gentiles.⁵¹ The expression υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ (9:15) is also a traditional biblical phrase for the Israelites, in this case the Jews.⁵² In the New Testament the phrase is used only a few times.⁵³ The somewhat awkward way of formulating continues throughout Jesus' speech. The expression σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς is probably a Semitizing way of saying σκεῦος ἐκλεκτόν ("chosen object").⁵⁴ The word σκεῦος can be used in the sense of instrument or tool,⁵⁵ and Saul is portrayed here as an instrument Jesus has chosen to "bring his name" before Gentiles and Jews. In Gal. 1:15-16, Paul states that God had already set him apart before he was born. This is exactly what is meant by "chosen" in Acts: God has chosen especially this person to preach the good news.

A major difference between Acts 9 and Galatians 1 is that according to Acts 9:15 Jesus sends Paul to Gentiles and Jews, whereas in Gal. 1:16 Paul himself states that his mission is to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.⁵⁶ Comparable statements can be found in, for instance, Gal. 2:9; Rom. 1:5 and 15:18. In Rom. 11:13, Paul even calls himself "an apostle to the Gentiles (ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος)." This is not to say, of course, that Paul was not concerned about the fate of the Jews who had not yet been baptized. In 1 Cor. 9:19-23, for instance, Paul suggests (in a rather rhetorical passage) that he also tries to "win" Jews. In Rom. 11:13-14 he expresses his hope that his mission among the Gentiles will also result in an increase of Jews becoming Christians. However, he strictly limits his missionary activities to Gentiles, perhaps as a result of an agreement between him and the apostles in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:7-9).

In Acts things are different. The overall design in which Paul's missionary activities are presented is theological rather than historical: the gospel is brought to the Jews first, and at a later stage (when

⁵¹ See in the LXX, e.g., Ps. 71:11; 101:16; 134:10; Isa. 60:3; 62:2.

⁵² See in the LXX, e.g., Gen. 32:33; Exod. 1:7; Ps. 102:7; 1 Macc. 3:15.

⁵³ The author of Acts may be using some Semitizing constructions here to illustrate that Jesus spoke Hebrew (or Aramaic), as he has Paul explicitly state in 26:14.

⁵⁴ See F. Blass/A. Debrunner/F. Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, Göttingen 1979, pp. 136-137 (§165.2).

⁵⁵ Cf. Polybius, *Historiae* XIII 5.7; XV 25 1-2.

⁵⁶ For an attempt to harmonize both accounts, see E. Benz, *Paulus als Visionär. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der Visionsberichte des Paulus in der Apostelgeschichte und in der paulinischen Briefen*, Wiesbaden 1952, pp. 97-101.

the Jews reject it) to the Gentiles. In order to have Paul's activities conform to this design the author usually has him start his preaching at local synagogues, even though most of his missionary activities are located in Gentile areas. Often, his preaching at the synagogue is without much success.⁵⁷ The author provides a theological foundation for this pattern in Acts 26:22-23. There he has Paul state that he preaches the message already predicted by "the prophets and Moses," namely that the Christ would come, suffer, be the first to rise from the dead, and "proclaim light both to *our people* and to *the Gentiles*."⁵⁸ It is, therefore, understandable that in 9:15 the author has Jesus send Saul to both Jews and Gentiles. This theological starting point, which Pervo adequately calls the "salvation-historical principle," has its counterpart in the letters of Paul.⁵⁹ In Rom. 1:16, for instance, Paul states: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, *to the Jew first and also to the Greek*." In a way, then, the description in Acts of Paul's method of working does not entirely contradict Paul's letters.⁶⁰

As the Paul of the letters, the Paul of Acts is concerned about the fate of the Jews. However, the subtlety of Paul's own reasoning in, for instance, Romans 9-11 is replaced by a far clearer pattern in Acts: whenever possible, the Jews are given the opportunity to receive the gospel. Paul *became* the apostle of the Gentiles, not because he did not preach the gospel to the Jews, but because he travelled mainly through Gentile areas and local Jews were often hostile towards his mission. The author of Acts has Paul explain the Jewish rejection of the gospel in 28:17-28 by quoting Isa. 6:9-10. In 28:28, Paul concludes: "this salvation has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen." In other words, the ancient Scriptures already foretold that many Jews would refuse to accept God's message and that many Gentiles would become believers. The idea that Paul always started his preaching in a synagogue is a reconstruction by the author of Acts which perfectly fits his salvation-historical principle.⁶¹

⁵⁷ See, e.g., Acts 13:4-5, 15-43; 16:13-15; 17:2-4.

⁵⁸ Cf. Luke 2:32, which is related to Isa. 49:6.

⁵⁹ Pervo, *Dating Acts*, pp. 104-105.

⁶⁰ Cf. J. Jervell, "Paul in the Acts of the Apostles," in: J. Kremer (ed.), *Les Actes des Apôtres. Traditions, rédaction, théologie*, Leuven 1979, pp. 297-306, esp. 303-304.

⁶¹ Pervo, *Dating Acts*, pp. 104-105; E.P. Sanders, *Paul. A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford 2001, pp. 23-24.

The free interpretation of Paul's autobiographical information already starts in Jesus' speech in 9:15, when he announces to Ananias that Paul is his instrument to reach both Gentiles and Jews. In 9:16 Jesus tells Ananias that Paul will have to suffer for (πάσχω ὑπέρ) his name. This motif often occurs in Paul's letters. In 2 Cor. 1:3-7, for instance, he speaks about the sufferings the Corinthians have to endure for the sake of being Christians, and links these sufferings to those of Christ and himself (cf. 1 Thess. 2:14-17). In Phil. 1:29 Paul states that believers are not only granted the privilege of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him (πάσχω ὑπέρ) as well. In Acts 9:17-19a we hear how Ananias goes to Saul and cures him. Saul is filled by the Holy Spirit and is baptized. These elements follow naturally from the preceding storylines.

We may conclude that Acts 9:10-19a is a recreation of history mainly based on the literary pattern of punishment and repentance. Some elements have probably been derived from Paul's letters, such as the idea that Christians (in this case Saul) would have to suffer for Christ. The details about Paul's stay in Damascus are rather un-specific; perhaps the author knew of a Damascene Christian called Ananias, perhaps he knew of a street called Straight in Damascus, but the presence of these details does not prove that a tradition about Paul's calling in Damascus existed independent of the letters. The main difference between the Pauline letters and Acts 9:10-19a is the target audience of Paul's mission: was he only the apostle of the Gentiles, or did he also preach the gospel to the Jews? In his letters, Paul only rarely speaks about his working method, which enabled the author of Acts to reconstruct history on the basis of his "salvation-historic principle": the salvation is for the Jews first, then for the Gentiles. Therefore, in Acts 9 he has Jesus send Paul to both Gentiles and Jews.

d. *Acts 9:19b-25*

In Acts 9:19b-20 we are told that for several days Saul resides with the Christians in Damascus and starts preaching the gospel in the synagogues. The author takes the opportunity to tell us once again how vigorously Saul persecuted the Christians before Christ appeared to him. In 9:21 the Jews who hear him preach recall Saul's

activities in Jerusalem and the purpose of his voyage to Damascus (cf. 9:13-14 and my comments on that passage).⁶²

An important parallel between Acts 9 and the Pauline letters is found in 9:23-25 and 2 Cor. 11:32-33. In 2 Cor. 11:16-33 Paul boasts about the sufferings he had to endure as a servant of Christ (11:23-28) and talks about his weaknesses. One example of such weakness is that he once had to escape from Damascus in a shameful way, by being let down in a basket through an opening in the city wall (11:32-33). He could not leave the city through the gates, since the governor of king Aretas guarded the city. In Acts 9:23-25 almost the same story is found. The Jews in Damascus want to kill Saul, but Saul hears of their plans. The Jews watch the city gates carefully day and night in order to kill Saul. Saul's pupils, however, manage to get him out of the city: at night, they lower him down the city wall in a basket. Here, Saul's escape is not described as a humiliating event but as a miraculous story.

Besides these thematical parallels the passages also contain some verbal correspondences, such as the combination διὰ τοῦ τείχους (Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:33) and χαλάω ἐν (Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:33). Some discrepancies, such as σπυρίς (Acts 9:25) versus σαργάνη (2 Cor. 11:33) can be explained as the replacing of a rare word by a more frequent one.⁶³ These parallels reinforce the idea that the author of Acts knew Paul's version of the story. There is another argument corroborating the idea that the story in Acts is dependent on that in 2 Corinthians. The idea of Jews watching the gates of Damascus is historically rather implausible. It does, however, perfectly fit the "salvation-historical principle" guiding the author of Acts in the development of his narrative (see further below).⁶⁴ This makes it probable that the story in Acts is secondary to that in 2 Corinthians.

What could have been the reason for the author of Acts to combine Paul's references to his calling with the story of his escape from Damascus? The answer may be found in his method. If our

⁶² In 9:21 the verb πορθέω is used to describe Saul's activities in Jerusalem. Exactly the same word is used in Gal. 1:13 and 23. Many scholars have noticed that in Acts 9 and Galatians 1 πορθέω is used in a rather specific sense, namely "to destroy *people*" (see, e.g., Leppä, *Luke's Critical Use of Galatians*, pp. 40-44; Dunn, *Galatians*, p. 58). This may be another indication of the literary dependency between Acts and Galatians.

⁶³ Cf. Enslin, "Once Again, Paul and Luke," p. 263.

⁶⁴ See also Pervo, *Dating Acts*, pp. 60-64.

suggestion at the beginning of this article is correct, the author of Acts wanted to provide his readers with a reconstruction of history which would also stir their emotions and convey a message to them. It is quite understandable that an author with a fondness of miraculous stories should want to include the story about the apostle escaping from Damascus by being lowered down a wall in a basket. However, the second letter to the Corinthians does not offer much context to Paul's escape from Damascus.⁶⁵ Therefore, the author of Acts had to make an educated guess about the time when this event had taken place. In the New Testament in its present form Damascus is only mentioned in Acts, Galatians 1 and 2 Corinthians 11. It may well be that this is the reason why the author of Acts combined the two stories from the Pauline letters.

The last question remaining is why the author of Acts chose to omit the name of Aretas (IV), who was king of the Nabataeans between 9 BCE and 40 CE. In Luke-Acts there is frequent mention of historical persons (for instance, Claudius in Acts 11:28, Herod in 12:1-23, Gallio in 18:12-17, Felix in 23:24, Claudius Lysias in 23:26, Festus in 25:13 and king Agrippa also in 25:13).⁶⁶ Sometimes these function as characters in the story, sometimes only as time markers. The answer to the question is related to an important literary pattern in Acts as a whole. On many occasions the author describes how the Jews want to prevent Paul from having success.⁶⁷ They try to hurt or kill him and his companions, or stir up the (local) authorities against Paul.⁶⁸ In other words, even in the case of pagan persecution of Jews or other apostles, in Acts the Jews are usually considered the instigators. In many cases the authorities are afraid of a Jewish riot, and comply with the wishes of the Jews. They usually do not find Paul guilty of major crimes. The Jews are to blame, the local authorities are either not guilty or opportunistic. In 2 Corinthians Paul does not mention why Aretas' governor wanted to take him into captivity. The author of Acts would certainly have filled this lacuna by stating that this was because the Jews wanted to have him killed.

⁶⁵ Of course, the context of Paul's reference to Damascus in 2 Corinthians may have been lost due to the composite nature of the letter. It is difficult to take that possibility into account here, the more so because this may already have been the case at the time Acts was written.

⁶⁶ See also Acts 3:6, 27; 24:1 and Luke 1:5; 2:1, 2; 3:1, 2.

⁶⁷ This motif also occurs in 1 Thess. 2:14-16.

⁶⁸ See, e.g., Acts 13:44-50; 14:1-7; 17:6-9; 18:12-17; 20:18-21; 23:12-15.

This would perfectly explain why the Jews are connected with an action which Paul himself ascribes to Aretas' governor. It does not explain, however, why Aretas is not mentioned any more. A first reason may be that the reference to Aretas in 2 Cor. 11:32 is in itself rather complicated. Paul does not mention persecution by the king but by his ἐθνάρχης,⁶⁹ and although Aretas was not unknown in antiquity, mentioning "Aretas' governor" would certainly not have had the same impact as mentioning Claudius or August. The frequent use of historical characters throughout Luke-Acts demonstrates that the author indeed knew something about some of the rulers in the period he describes. He does, for instance, correct Mark's reference to Herod as βασιλεύς (Mark 6:14) into τετραάρχης (Luke 9:7).⁷⁰ It is, therefore, possible that he was also aware of the historical situation in the period of Paul and considered it historically questionable that the governor of a Nabataean ruler persecuted Paul in Damascus, a city which did not belong to the Nabataeans.⁷¹ This would have distracted the readers from the main theme, the punishment and repentance of one of the greatest leaders of the Church, whose life from that very moment was threatened by the Jews.

Thus, the most important reason for the absence of Aretas' governor would be the central position of Acts 9 in the development of Paul's history. The story of Saul's punishment and repentance sets the tone for the rest of his history. Jesus announces that Saul will travel to many areas and preach to Jews and Gentiles. He will also suffer for the sake of Jesus. Saul changes his life and immediately begins to preach in the local synagogues (9:20-22). Then, for the first time, the Jews plan to kill him (9:23). Acts 9 contains the first of many episodes in which Paul is persecuted by his fellow Jews. In the

⁶⁹ For the interpretation of 2 Cor. 11:32-33, see, e.g., E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)* 1 (rev. and ed. G. Vermes/F. Millar/M. Goodman), Edinburgh 1973, pp. 581-583; Jewett, *Dating Paul's Life*, pp. 30-33; E.A. Knauf, "Zum Ethnarchen des Aretas 2 Kor 11 32," *ZNW* 74 (1983), pp. 145-147; J. Taylor, "The Ethnarch of King Aretas at Damascus. A Note on 2 Cor 11,32-33," *RB* 99 (1992), pp. 719-728; D.A. Campbell, "An Anchor for Pauline Chronology: Paul's Flight from 'the Ethnarch of King Aretas' (2 Corinthians 11:32-33)," *JBL* 121 (2002), pp. 279-302.

⁷⁰ The first time Luke mentions the tetrarch Herod is in 3:1, where he also introduces other rulers. See F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (Lk 1,1-9,51), Zürich 1989, pp. 167-168, 461. Bovon argues that Matthew and Luke independently changed "king Herod" into "Herod the tetrarch" (cf. Matt. 14:1).

⁷¹ In many historical books a short period of Nabatean rule is suggested during Aretas' reign. However, the reference in 2 Cor. 11 is the only indication for such rulership.

dramatic development of the plot it would have been rather disappointing to have the Jews go to the Nabataean governor of the city, asking him to guard the city gates. Therefore, the absence of Aretas' governor in Acts 9:23-25 is not a decisive argument for postulating another source than 2 Cor. 11:32-33.

3. *Paul/Saul*

The last element to be discussed with regard to Acts 9 is Paul's Semitic name, Σαῦλος. In his own letters this name is not found. Had Acts not existed, we would not have known that Paul was also called Saul. Paul's second name in Acts (there in fact his first one, since the name of Paul is introduced only in 13:9) is an exegetical problem which needs to be solved. Is it true, as most scholars maintain, that Paul really had both a Semitic and a Latin name? If that is the case, the Semitic name Saul is a traditional element in Acts. Before we can draw that conclusion, however, we should also examine the possibility that Paul's Semitic name is an invention on the part of the author.

The name Σαῦλος is a Greek transcription of the Hebrew name שׂאול. In 13:9, the author introduces the name Παῦλος by a short formula: "Saul, also known as Paul." From 13:13 onwards, he uses Παῦλος as Paul's name. In the three stories about Jesus' appearance to Paul, Jesus calls him Σαούλ (9:4; 22:7, 13; 26:14), another transcription of the Hebrew שׂאול.⁷²

Both Παῦλος and Σαῦλος were often used in the Greco-Roman period. Παῦλος is attested in various writings, for instance those of Polybius, Diodorus of Sicily, Strabo, Plutarch and Appian.⁷³ Σαῦλος is found in Josephus, for instance, there usually spelled Σαούλος (which is closer to Σαούλ, the transcription of the Hebrew name attested in the Septuagint). It is likely that the author of Acts, quite apart from his knowledge about the figure of Paul, was familiar with the three names under discussion: Παῦλος as a non-Jewish name,⁷⁴ Σα(ο)ῦλος as a Jewish name still in use in his days (a Greek form of

⁷² In 9:17 Ananias also uses this form of the name.

⁷³ In Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names*, p. 336, there are also two Palestinian attestations of the Latin name Paulus.

⁷⁴ See Acts 13:7, where Sergius Paulus is mentioned.

the Hebrew name שׂאול), and Σαούλ as its biblical transcription, for instance used for king Saul.⁷⁵

The author of Acts pays remarkably little attention to the change of Paul's name in 13:9. He does not claim that Παῦλος is the Greek equivalent of the Jewish Σαῦλος, but simply mentions that Paul was known by two names. This is something that needs to be explained. More than once, the author of Acts emphasizes that Paul was a zealous Jew before he became a Christian (see, for instance, 22:3-5; 26:2-11). Whereas Paul himself maintains that God called him especially to bring the gospel to the Gentiles, the author of Acts has him start his work as a missionary among the Jews. Only from chapter 13 onwards does Paul mainly travel to Gentile areas. In chapters 9-12, when he is working among Jews, Paul bears a Semitic name, and when he is working among Gentiles he bears a Roman name.⁷⁶ This may well be a literary feature marking the transition in Paul's activities: a Jew like Paul can hardly be imagined without a proper Jewish name. Historically, this is obviously not correct, since in the Greco-Roman period many Jews did not have recognizably Jewish names.⁷⁷ The use of a Semitic name for Paul, however, does accentuate his Jewish background,⁷⁸ and the beginning of Paul's mission among the Gentiles is a well-chosen moment to switch to his Greco-Roman name. Therefore, the author of Acts had good reasons to give Paul a Jewish name besides his Greco-Roman one. In my opinion, therefore, it is impossible to prove that the tradition of Paul's Semitic name Saul is older than Acts. Although it may be a traditional element in Acts, we should not overlook the possibility that the author himself introduced the name Saul to support his story. If that was the case, the question remains why the author would choose this particular name.

In Paul's letters, there are no indications that Paul had a second, Semitic name. Nevertheless, Paul sometimes mentions his Jewish background. These passages may have inspired the author of Acts to

⁷⁵ In Acts 13:21 we read: "God gave them Saul (Σαούλ) son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin."

⁷⁶ J. Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul. A Critical Life*, Oxford 1996, p. 42.

⁷⁷ In Acts, for instance, Aquila, a Jew from Pontus (Acts 18:2) and Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria (Acts 18:24) are mentioned.

⁷⁸ Barrett, *Acts*, pp. 609, 616, does not argue that the author of Acts invented Paul's Semitic name, but he does maintain that the name of Saul was used "to show that the well-known Christian Paul had deep roots in Judaism."

find a suitable name. In Phil. 3:5, Paul states that he is “a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews.” In Rom. 11:1, Paul says: “I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.” Paul calls himself a Hebrew and an Israelite, and states that he is “of the tribe of Benjamin.” One of the most well-known biblical representatives of this tribe is obviously king Saul. Add to that the fact that the Greek form of Saul, Σαῦλος, is rather similar to Παῦλος, and “Saul” becomes an obvious choice for a Semitic name for “Paul of the tribe of Benjamin.”⁷⁹ Acts 13:21 proves that the author of Acts indeed knew that king Saul came from the tribe of Benjamin; the only time Benjamin is mentioned in Acts is as part of a description of king Saul (13:21).⁸⁰ Just before 13:21, and just after 13:7, where Sergius Paulus is mentioned, the author switches from “Saul” to “Paul.” In the passages in which Jesus appears to Paul the Hebrew form Σαούλ is used. In 26:14 the author has Paul explicitly state that Jesus addressed him in Hebrew. This provides the reader with further “evidence” of Paul’s Jewish background (he could recognize and understand Hebrew; see also 21:40 and 22:2). Obviously, this literary feature would have been impossible if the author had only used Paul’s Latin name.

Whether Paul really also bore the name of Saul will necessarily remain a subject for speculation. What I have tried to demonstrate is that it is not self-evident that Paul’s Semitic name is a traditional element in Acts. However this may be, the author of Acts has cleverly used this double name in the development of his plot. It helps not only to accentuate Paul’s Jewish background, but also highlights his switch to missionary work among Gentiles.

⁷⁹ See also Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 101.

⁸⁰ Interestingly, in the verses that follow Acts 13:21 king Saul is contrasted with David, and Jesus is explicitly connected with David (13:22-23). It may be that the resemblance between 9:4 (τί με διώκεις) and David’s words to king Saul in 1 Sam. 26:18 (LXX: ἵνα τί τοῦτο καταδιώκει ὁ κύριός μου ὅπισω τοῦ δούλου αὐτοῦ) is not entirely coincidental. If this is true, the Semitic name Saul gave the author of Acts the opportunity to have Jesus address Paul in the same way as Jesus’ predecessor king David once addressed king Saul when he was persecuting David. Cf. Windisch, “Die Christusepiphanie vor Damaskus,” pp. 19-20.

Conclusion

However one interprets the similarities and differences between Acts 9:1-25 and the letters of Paul, it is certain that Acts 9 was written by an author who was not only reporting historical facts, but also re-creating history. The history of Saul's calling in Acts 9 bears the marks of the author's theology and his literary strategy. The narration represents the literary pattern of punishment and repentance, which explains many of the literary features, such as the emphasis on Saul's misdeeds, the way Jesus appears, Saul's punishment, and the presence of an intermediary, Ananias.

At the beginning of this article I argued that it is difficult to imagine that the author of Acts, who must have been looking for information about his main characters, did not have access to Paul's letters. In my opinion, the comparison of Acts 9:1-25 with the letters proves that Acts depends on them. The basic elements of the story in Acts 9 are all present in Paul's letters, most notably Galatians and 1 and 2 Corinthians. The structure of the passage is largely parallel to that of Galatians 1, and there are also some verbal agreements between Acts 9 and the letters of Paul. Moreover, the author's choice of the literary pattern of punishment and repentance is perfectly conceivable if he used Paul's own statements about his calling in Gal. 1:11-17 and in 1 Cor. 15:8-10 as his basis. The major differences can all be explained from the literary and theological strategy of the author.

This does not mean, that the author of Acts used no other information than Paul's own letters. The figure of Ananias and the Damascus street called Straight, for instance, may have been known to the author, who then decided to include them in this story. Paul's birth in Tarsus is probably another traditional element in Acts 9. In the second half of the book, this fact is used as an explanation of some special treatment Paul receives, and is connected with Paul's alleged Roman citizenship. Paul's Tarsian background is an interesting example of the way the author has dealt with the facts he knew. He appears to have been able to build a storyline on a minimum of infor-

mation, information he learned not only from oral tradition, but also from the letters of Paul.⁸¹

⁸¹ I would like to express my appreciation to H.W. Hollander, M.J. de Jong and J. Tromp, who read an earlier version of this article and offered helpful criticism, and to C.E. Smit, who corrected the English (needless to say, I am responsible for any mistakes that may remain).

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IGNATIUS, LETTER TO THE MAGNESIANS 8:2 ONCE AGAIN

Boudewijn Dehandschutter

Editors of the Apostolic Fathers in general, and of the Ignatian Epistles in particular, face many problems. The textual evidence is complicated, and often leads to solutions which are less satisfying than pragmatic. Thus, it is understandable that the most recent editor of the Ignatian Epistles, B.E. Ehrman, has chosen a base text, and, as he explains, modifies it “to a greater or lesser extent, based on my evaluation of the textual evidence.”¹ That base text is and remains the edition of Bihlmeyer.² On its own there is not much to be said about that: other editors have done the same; the Bihlmeyer edition has been the basis of more than one modern translation and/or commentary.³ On the other hand critical reflections may remain, and the named editors, as well as other scholars have not failed to note their existence.⁴

This contribution will also formulate such a critical reflection. It was prompted by an interest in Ehrman’s evaluation of the textual evidence about a well known passage (or well known *crux*) of Ignatius’ *Letter to the Magnesians* 8:2. This paragraph contains a statement about the “one God who manifested himself through Jesus

¹ B.D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers* 1. *I Clement*. II *Clement*. *Ignatius*. *Polycarp*. *Didache*. 2 *Epistle of Barnabas*. *Papias and Quadratus*. *Epistle to Diognetus*. *The Shepherd of Hermas* Cambridge MA/London 2003; cf. 1, p. vii.

² K. Bihlmeyer, *Die apostolischen Väter*. *Neubearbeitung der Funkschen Ausgabe*, Tübingen 1956; Ehrman gives this as a “3rd ed.,” which obviously should be a 2nd ed. The third edition was published as an “Unveränderter Nachdruck” of the second in 1970. For the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the base edition is expectedly M. Whitaker, *Die apostolischen Väter* 1. *Der Hirt des Hermas*, Berlin 1956, ²1967.

³ To mention only P.Th. Camelot, *Ignace d’Antioche. Polycarpe de Smyrne. Lettres. Martyre de Polycarpe*, Paris ⁴1969; cf. p. 53; J.A. Fischer, *Die apostolischen Väter*. *Griechisch und Deutsch*, München 1956, and many re-versions, p. XIV.

⁴ There is for example substantial reason to question the Bihlmeyer text of the *Didache* as well as his edition of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. See B. Dehandschutter, “The Text of the *Didache*: Some Comments on the Edition of Klaus Wengst,” in: C.N. Jefford (ed.), *The Didache in Context. Essays on Its Text, History and Transmission*, Leiden 1995, pp. 37-46; *id.*, *Martyrium Polycarpi. Een literair-kritische studie*, Leuven 1979, pp. 57-129. As to Ehrman’s presentation of Polycarp’s *Letter* and the *Martyrdom*, we return to it in our volume of collected essays: J. Leemans (ed.), *Polycarpiana Studies on Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity. Collected Essays*, Leuven 2007.

Christ his Son, who is his Word that came forth from silence ...”⁵ The translation corresponds with Ehrman’s Greek text as well as with the Bihlmeyer text, reflecting a consensus that the Greek without *ἄιδιος οὐκ* is the more original text, preferable to that which is actually the reading of the Greek middle recension:⁶ *λόγος αἰδίου οὐκ ἀπὸ σιγῆς προελθὼν*, “... the *Eternal* Word *not* proceeding from silence ...” On this point however, Ehrman’s apparatus is extremely succinct, referring to the “short” reading as documented by A (=Armenian translation), and the *addition* of *ἄιδιος οὐκ* as witnessed by GL (Greek text of the middle recension and the Latin translation).⁷ Bihlmeyer’s apparatus is somewhat more circumstantial: the reading without *ἄιδιος οὐκ* is documented also by Severus, the “longer” reading by Timotheus Aelurus. In both cases Bihlmeyer explicitly refers to Lightfoot’s edition (the latter’s authority being never far away).⁸ although German scholarship was not at all unaware of the “short” reading,⁹ it might be said that the voluminous work on the Apostolic Fathers by the bishop of Durham vigorously introduced it.¹⁰ In 1910 A. Lelong summarised: “Dès 1868, Lightfoot démontra qu’il fallait supprimer les mots *ἄιδιος οὐκ* sur l’autorité concordante de la version arménienne et d’une citation de Sévère d’Antioche. Après lui, Zahn

⁵ Translation according to Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers* 1, p. 249.

⁶ Cf. our summary in “Ignatiusbriefe,” *RGK* 4 (2001), pp. 34-35.

⁷ Cf. his essay “Textual Traditions Compared: The New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers,” in: A.F. Gregory/C.M. Tuckett (eds), *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, Oxford 2005 (2007), pp. 9-27; cf. pp. 23-24.

⁸ Cf. Fischer, *Die apostolischen Väter*, p. 166, who reproduces Bihlmeyer’s apparatus; comp. Camelot, *Ignace d’Antioche*, pp. 86-87; W.R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, Philadelphia 1985, p. 120 (the latter associating Lightfoot and Zahn), to refer only to a few editors/translators.

⁹ Cf. T. Zahn, *Ignatii et Polycarpi Epistulae Martyria Fragmenta*, Leipzig 1876, pp. 36-37 (and the introduction p. XXXVI), seems to have adopted it quite independently; cf. the comment by Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers* 2.2, p. 127 (see note 10).

¹⁰ J.B. Lightfoot discussed the reading for the first time in 1868, and repeated this in the famous *The Apostolic Fathers* 2.2, London 1885, pp. 126-127 (= ²1889). He emphasises that he was the first to take it up. But the Petermann-edition of the Ignatian Epistles (J.H. Petermann, *S. Ignatii Patris Apostolici quae feruntur Epistolae una cum ejusdem Martyrio*, Leipzig 1849) on which Lightfoot was relying, has to be considered, as we shall argue in the following lines. However, it has to be noted that this edition was already a matter of discussion *before* Lightfoot made use of it: see A.R.M. Dressel, *Patrum Apostolicorum Opera*, Lipsiae 1857, pp. XXIX-XXX.

et Funk ont adopté cette leçon que Hilgenfeld est le seul, de tous les grands éditeurs modernes d'Ignace, à rejeter."¹¹

It seems that, after a century, we have not advanced much further. Generally speaking, some "dissidents" have voiced disagreement about the case of the Ignatian Epistles as a whole (claiming their inauthenticity), but they remained a minority, and their criticism, also in relation to our text, has not enjoyed any real reception.¹² Ehrman concludes that "most scholars have not found their (= Weijenborg, Joly, Rius-Camps, Hübner, Lechner) arguments convincing"—as far as the whole problem of the authenticity of the Ignatian Epistles is concerned.¹³ Returning once again to the *Letter to the Magnesians* 8:2 (because it plays a considerable role, not only for Joly,¹⁴ but also for the "more recent" discussion, launched by R. Hübner's contribution to the "Echtheit" of the Ignatian Epistles, dating already now from more than ten years ago),¹⁵ it is not our purpose to take a position as to that discussion in its entirety. We would prefer to go back to Lightfoot's argumentation on the text in question, and ask about its validity, in order to have a better opinion about the strength and the reliability of Lightfoot's argument. It is a pleasure and an honour to devote these lines to someone for whom the *text* of a writing has always been of major importance.

¹¹ A. Lelong, *Les pères apostoliques 3. Ignace d'Antioche et Polycarpe de Smyrne. Epîtres. Martyre de Polycarpe*, Paris, 1910, p. XXVII; comp. p. 35 (= ²1927).

¹² We refer to H. Delafosse, R. Joly, R.M. Hübner, and T. Lechner (cf. next notes). Other positions such as that of R. Weijenborg, *Les lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche. Etude de critique littéraire et de théologie*, Leiden 1969, and J. Rius-Camps, *The Four Authentic Letters of Ignatius, the Martyr*, Rome 1979, are not considered as they do not contribute to the question of our text. Rius-Camps, *Letters of Ignatius*, p. 357, accepts the "short" reading, considering with Bauer *aidios ouk* as a late anti-gnostic correction. See for reactions on the whole of their hypotheses: R. Joly, *Le dossier d'Ignace d'Antioche*, Bruxelles 1979, pp. 12-14; 121-127, the latter pages referring to Rius-Camps' Spanish version of his thesis. Nor the plea for the Long Recension made by Weijenborg, nor the interpolation-construct of Rius-Camps received a real support. As to the origin of the Long Recension, see always D. Hagedorn, *Der Hiobkommentar des Arianers Julian*, Berlin 1973, pp. XXXVII-XLI.

¹³ Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers* 1, pp. 212-213.

¹⁴ R. Joly, *Le dossier*, pp. 71-73.

¹⁵ R.M. Hübner, "Thesen zur Echtheit und Datierung der sieben Briefe des Ignatius von Antiochien," *ZAC* 1 (1997), pp. 44-72; cf. pp. 51-52; and *id.*, *Der Paradox Eine. Antignostischer Monarchianismus im zweiten Jahrhundert*, Leiden 1999, pp. 106-111; moreover T. Lechner, *Ignatius adversus Valentinianos? Chronologische und theologiegeschichtliche Studien zu den Briefen des Ignatius von Antiochien*, Leiden 1999.

1. *Lightfoot's Argumentation*

It is important to take up Lightfoot's argumentation, as it has been developed in his comments to the text of the Ignatian *Letter to the Magnesians*. In summary we must repeat his four points: (1) The reading without αἴδιος οὐκ has higher authority than the other (i.e. the one including the words as it happens in the Greek textual tradition). "It stands in the oldest extant form of the text, that of the Armenian version, and in one of the earliest extant quotations, that of Severus ..." ¹⁶ (2) The (short) reading is better adapted to the context. (3) It accords with the language of Ignatius. (4) "The insertion of the words, if spurious, is much more easily explained than their omission, if genuine." ¹⁷

It is mainly the last argument that has held the day. A reading such as Christ forthcoming as the Logos ἀπὸ σιγῆς would be "distasteful" to orthodox ears with its "Gnostic" sound, and have prompted an alteration which was almost a correction. K. Lake explains explicitly in his "classic" edition that the long reading "is rightly regarded by recent editors as a doctrinal emendation due to fear of Gnostic theories in which Σιγή and Θεός were the original pair of which Λόγος emanated." ¹⁸ And Lake's successor in editing the Loeb volumes on the Apostolic Fathers, B.D. Ehrman, recently notes again, after having expressed his reservations about the first argument of Lightfoot:

Most persuasive, though, is his (Lightfoot's) argument that the text as given in the Armenian, that Christ was the "Word which comes forth from Silence ...," would have been changed by scribes concerned about its Gnostic overtones ... Ignatius himself ... is sometimes thought to have had something like Gnostic leanings; at least by the standards of later orthodoxy, some of his language was incautious at best ... it would make good sense that his text was changed to avoid its misuse by Gnostics in support of their own doctrines. ¹⁹

But as editors after Lightfoot have (as a rule!) been willing to accept his judgement about the transmission of the text, it is necessary to give full attention to his "first" argument.

¹⁶ Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers* 2, 2, p. 126.

¹⁷ *Idem, ibid.*

¹⁸ K. Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers* 1, London/New York 1919, p. 204.

¹⁹ Ehrman, "Textual Traditions Compared," p. 24.

2. Some Critical Comments

As we already pointed out, to Lightfoot the Armenian represents the oldest form of the text. This is a very curious statement. Lightfoot's own acquaintance with the Armenian version is entirely due to the edition of the Ignatian Epistles by Petermann.²⁰ It must be noted that this is an edition of the *Greek* text of the epistles, in which Petermann for the first time brings together in his notes the way in which the Syriac and the Armenian versions of the Epistles can be used in the editing of the Greek text. Everything what Lightfoot has to declare about the Armenian, is owed to Petermann.²¹ However, Petermann himself laments that his knowledge of the Armenian is based on the edition of the Ignatian Epistles which appeared in 1783, the value of which he was unable to secure, as he could not derive from that edition any information about the five manuscripts on which it relies.²² What is clear however, is that that Armenian translation counts thirteen Ignatian Epistles, mixing up the eventually more authentic ones with six pseudepigraphical ones. Petermann further develops his conviction that the Armenian is based upon a Syriac version: his introduction elaborates this issue, not without strength.²³ But the one who re-reads this introduction does not escape the impression that Petermann was very cautious, and in no way proposed that this dependence on a Syriac "Vorlage" implied *per se* the antiquity of the

²⁰ Cf. note 10.

²¹ Petermann himself could rely (as Lightfoot does after him) on the publication of Syriac fragments by W. Cureton, *Corpus Ignatianum. A Complete Collection of the Ignatian Epistles*, Berlin 1849 (i.e. the same year as his own edition of the Ignatian epistles). Lightfoot's lack of precision in his references to Petermann has led to the misunderstanding that Petermann *edited* the Armenian text; so, not without consequences, Bihlmeyer: cf. *Die Apostolischen Väter*, p. XXXVI: "Die armenische Übersetzung ... der sieben echten Briefe mit sechs gefälschten, welche im 5. Jahrhundert aus dem Syrischen geflossen sein dürfte, wurde von J.H. Petermann, Leipzig 1849, ediert."

²² For this edition, see the bibliography of R.W. Thomson, *A Bibliography of Classical Armenian Literature to 1500 AD*, Turnhout 1995, p. 60: *T'ulik' S. Ignatiosi astuacazgeac' martirosi Antioch'ay episkoposi*, Constantinople 1783. Petermann's comments on the edition however are as follows: "Hinc perquam difficile est, certiora de his codicibus statuere. Sed, si licet conjecturae locum dare, dixerim equidem, non eundem omnes textum prae-buisse, ut e sequenti disquisitione patebit, et partem eorum tempore recentiori esse exaratam, id quod elucere mihi videtur tam e recentiori vocum ac nominum praesertim propriorum scriptione, quam e flexione et constructione verborum aevo antiquiori inusitata et grammatices regulis magis minusve contraria."

²³ Cf. Petermann, *S. Ignatii Patris ... Epistulae*, pp. VI-XXVI.

Armenian version, and that, in the case of our text, it would lead to the rejection of the Greek. Maintaining the long reading in his text, he only discusses the testimony of the Armenian in confrontation with the quotation of Severus,²⁴ adding the remark that another Syriac quotation, taken from a writing of Timotheus Aclurus,²⁵ supports the long reading. Based as it is on Petermann, Lightfoot's argument that the Armenian is the oldest extant form of the text astonishes the reader, the more as his own observations about the Armenian version in his introduction show that he is circumspect concerning the value of this version, available only through a wholly uncritical edition; he realises very well what could go wrong through a complicated history of transmission from Greek to Syriac, and from Syriac to Armenian.²⁶ But ultimately Lightfoot nevertheless notes: "Yet notwithstanding all these vicissitudes, the Armenian version is within certain limits one of the most important aids towards the formation of a correct text."²⁷

The argumentation on this point by the bishop of Durham invites to some critical comments. Lightfoot seems to uphold the value of the Armenian by means of the Syriac, and through this version he "reaches" a Greek text much less contaminated in comparison to that of the actual Greek manuscript tradition. But the learned editor plays down the fact that also the Armenian contains thirteen Letters, i.e. goes back to a "Vorlage" which displays contamination with the spurious Letters. Moreover, Lightfoot in following Petermann regarding to the dependence of the Armenian on the Syriac, goes as far as to reinforce the idea of an *early* translation. This remains unproven, in Lightfoot's case as well as in Petermann's. Both of them seem to

²⁴ I.e. Severus of Antioch, in his polemical writing against Johannes Grammaticus, *Contra Impium Grammaticum*, where in the Florilegium after the third book, several Ignatian quotations are listed. Cf. note 30 for the edition. Unfortunately, the Greek text of this passage has not been preserved.

²⁵ His "Refutation of the Definition of the Council of Chalcedon," in as much as deducible from the notes of Cureton, *Corpus Ignatianum*, pp. 352-353; but contemporary scholarship makes a difference between several parts of codex BM Add. 12156 on which Cureton relies (cf. CPG 5472 and 5482), and I was not able to find the Ignatian quotation in those parts of the codex published until now, namely F. Nau, PO XIII, pp. 202-238, and the edition of Ebied and Wickham (see note 32).

²⁶ Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers Part 1.1*, London 1885, pp. 86-90 (=1889); comp. A. Harnack, *Die Überlieferung und der Bestand der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius 1.1*, Leipzig 1893, p. 77.

²⁷ Lightfoot, *ibid.*, p. 90.

rely, in an extremely uncritical way, on the vague information of the activities of translation by the Armenians in the fifth century, as if a later date for the translation from the Syriac would be excluded.²⁸ And above all, it cannot be assumed that an early date would guarantee the quality of the text. However "early" the Armenian, supported by the Syriac actually is, it remains the fact that the lack of ἀἰδιος οὐκ may be due to textual corruption. A *later* source such as Severus does not amend this.²⁹

It seems to escape Lightfoot's attention that the Armenian offers for our passage another difficulty which questions the reliability of its "Vorlage." The Armenian gives the following version of the passage: quod existit unus Deus qui manifestatus est per Jesum Christum qui est verbum exiens e silentio.³⁰ This text omits *also* after "Jesus Christ": "his Son," as well as "his" together with "word," and this certainly is different from the text of Severus' quotation, of which we have at least a reliable edition.³¹ Otherwise, to maintain the "higher authority" of the Armenian in these conditions makes little sense, even not with the help of the Severus quotation. As a matter of fact, there is no reason to dismiss the presence of the longer reading in the quotation of (the Syriac version of) Timotheus Aelurus' book against the Council of Chalcedon, which disappears quite abruptly from Lightfoot's argument, although it is offered by Cureton as well as by Petermann.³² It remains remarkable that, although some warnings

²⁸ Especially Petermann's argument (*S. Ignatii Patris ... Epistulae*, p. XXVI), blindly followed by Lightfoot, that there is only occasionally a trace of translations from the Syriac into Armenian in a later period, needs urgent re-assessment.

²⁹ Lightfoot elaborates the fact that Severus feels the need to comment on the "short" reading, the "logos coming forth from silence"; but this does not mean anything else than that Severus in the 6th century had a text before him without ἀἰδιος οὐκ. Severus' comments show to Lightfoot that he is not aware of another reading, but this on its own does not mean that Severus' reading is the more original, even if this is the conviction of Cureton, *Corpus Ignatianum*, p. 355. It should not be forgotten that for Cureton the discussion is here quite irrelevant as he recognises only three original Ignatian letters (Polycarp, Ephesians, Romans), on the basis of the Syriac textual transmission.

³⁰ Armenian: "ēthe goy mi astuac or yaytneschaw i jern ysi khshi or e ban eleal i lruthene"; Petermann, *S. Ignatii Patris ... Epistulae*, p. 77.

³¹ J. Lebon, *Severi Antiocheni Liber contra Impium Grammaticum Orationis Tertiae pars posterior* (CSCO 58; Paris, 1933), p. 281.

³² Here again one has to guess about the correctness of the source of Cureton's Syriac text of Timotheus (BM Add. 12156); cf. Cureton, *Corpus Ignatianum*, pp. 352-353. The difficulties surrounding the text of the "Refutatio against the Council of Chalcedon and the Tomos Leonis," should warn for too easy solutions; cf. R.Y. Ebied/L.R. Wickham, "Timothy Aelurus. Against the Definition of Chalcedon," in: C. Laga *et al.* (eds), *After Chalcedon. Studies in*

have been formulated about the weaknesses of Lightfoot's decisions,³³ the reception of them has been so general.

Conclusion

On the whole it is difficult to agree with Lightfoot's preferences. His comments make continuously clear that his text-critical approach goes not uninfluenced by another concern: that of the authenticity of the seven Letters, and the fact that the longer reading in the *Letter to the Magnesians* 8:2 might be a threat to that authenticity. One could wonder whether this is really so, and whether the long reading in the Ignatian passage could not be understood beyond such controversy about its authenticity. It is urgently necessary to return to what the text is actually saying: there is "one God Who manifested Himself through Jesus Christ His Son, Who is His eternal Word," and *this eternal Word* "has not come forth from (the) Silence" (of God),³⁴ as it is eternal! Such a statement, which tries to formulate the position of the Son, maintaining a "monotheistic" view on the Father—by calling the Son His eternal Word—does not necessarily refer to a "Gnostic" concept of Σιγή, which would have provoked correction. Then the argument of Lightfoot, which goes far beyond the evidence offered by Petermann, all together risks becoming irrelevant. Moreover one could say that the text with the longer reading implies "der Paradox Eine," as it was formulated by R.M. Hübner to describe monarchianism in the second century. And although we would be inclined to describe this monarchianism as not necessarily (always) anti-Gnostic, we could agree on the whole with Hübner's analysis of the passage: "Hier ist also sehr wohl das antihäretische Bekenntnis zum einzigen Gott vorhanden. Es wird von ihm gesagt, das er sich schon im Alten Bund durch seinen Sohn, den ewigen Logos,

Theology and Church History Offered to A. Van Roey, Leuven 1985, pp. 115-166. One really does not understand why the text quoted by Timotheus would have suffered interpolation (so Camelot, *Ignace d'Antioche*, p. 87), and Severus' text in BM Add. 12157 would have not been altered!

³³ See e.g. H. Delafosse, *Lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche*, Paris 1927, pp. 60-65; B. Basile, "Un ancien témoin arabe des lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche," *Melto* 4 (1968), pp. 107-191.

³⁴ Cf. Ignatius, *Eph.* 15:1. Camelot's comments are purely arbitrary: "... ces mots d'Ignace ne visent pas la génération éternelle du Verbe." (*ibid.*).

offenbart hat,”³⁵ with the exception of “antihäretisch” as far as we are concerned. If one would manage to leave the whole question “heretical—antiheretical”³⁶ outside the debate, one could arrive to an unbiased interpretation of a text which reflects a “common” second century monarchianism. But this might be dated as well in the second half of the second century as in the first half, and in no way guarantees what is commonly called “authenticity”!

³⁵ Hübner, *Der Paradox Eine*, p. 139 (cf. the whole interpretation of this passage, pp. 137-141; 192-195); cf. *id.*, “Der eine Person und die zwei Naturen—Der Weg zur Zweinaturenlehre,” in: *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Göttingen 2003, pp. 139-168.

³⁶ So characteristic for nineteenth century scholarship as it had mainly the “authenticity controversy” in mind, which lasted already two centuries.

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MATTHEW 2:16 AND JOSEPHUS' PORTRAYALS OF HEROD

Jan Willem van Henten

Herod's Massacre of the Innocents in Bethlehem was a favourite scene in Italian Renaissance art.¹ Giotto included it in the fresco cycle in the Scrovegni Chapel at Padua (1303-1305), and Giovanni Pisano depicted it on two sculpted pulpits made at Pistoia (1301-1311).² In fact, Herod the Great has been consistently remembered as a monstrous ruler since the first century BCE. Josephus characterizes Herod as the most savage tyrant that had ever lived (*War* II 84). Matthew mentions Herod several times in his story about Jesus' birth and the early travels of the Holy Family (1:18-2:23). He highlights Herod's murderous behaviour in the tantalizingly brief story of the Massacre of the Infants (2:16). Photius combines traditions from Josephus and Matt. 2:16, and writes about Herod in one of his excerpts:

... in his demented rage against him, Herod did not touch the Master, but made himself the assassin of numerous little children. In murderous cruelty it is said that he exceeded every other tyrant.³

Famous is Shakespeare's brief quote "it out-Herods Herod" (*Hamlet* III 2), which hyperbolically highlights Herod's violent rule and echoes Photius' statement. Herod's image as a brutal tyrant is also recycled in contemporary mass media. Mark Rich's script for *The Nativity Story* (2006, director Catherine Hardwicke), a movie about Jesus' mother Mary, presents the king as a vicious tyrant and a pawn of the Roman Empire, who was increasingly paranoid about his hold on power.

Scholars frequently support Herod's image as a wicked tyrant.⁴ Recently, however, a few discordant voices have suggested that Jo-

¹ I warmly thank Emma E. England, University of Amsterdam, for correcting my English and making helpful suggestions. The translations from Josephus' *Jewish War* I-II and *Jewish Antiquities* derive from the translations by J. Sievers, A. Forte, S. Mason and myself for the Brill Josephus Project.

² One is in the Church of St Andrea and the other in the Cathedral of Pistoia, further details in J. Lubbock, *Storytelling in Christian Art from Giotto to Donatello*, New Haven/London 2006, pp. 39-147.

³ Photius 238. R. Henry, *Photius. Bibliothèque. Texte établi et traduit* 5, Paris 1967, pp. 142-143.

sephus' and Matthew's depictions of Herod do not do justice to the king and argue that Herod was, in fact, a capable ruler and one of Rome's more successful client kings.⁵ This contribution will follow the lead of those scholars who assume that Josephus and Matthew have portrayed Herod the Great much more negatively than he would deserve according to ancient standards of rulership. First, I will briefly discuss all Herod references in Matthew 2 and then concentrate on Matt. 2:16, which, in my view, is part of a trajectory that constructs Herod the Great as a tyrant in increasingly negative terms. I consider Matthew's passage unhistorical.⁶ Second, I will deal with selective passages from Josephus' different portrayals of Herod in the *Jewish War* and the *Jewish Antiquities*. My final section combines my brief analysis of Josephus' portraits of Herod with Matthew's depiction of him, which will enable the location of Matthew's passage in the ongoing chain of traditions that construct Herod as a wicked and murderous ruler.

1. Herod in Matthew 2

Matthew's unique information about the birth of Jesus the Messiah in Matthew 1-2 focuses on the Who and How (chapter 1) as well as on

⁴ For example, S. Sandmel, *Herod, Profile of a Tyrant*, Philadelphia 1967; A. Schalit, *König Herodes: der Mann und sein Werk*. Trans. into German by Jehoschua Amir, Berlin 1969; ²2001 (originally published in Hebrew: *הורדוס המלך, האיש והמלוכה*, Jerusalem 1960), pp. 646-649; T. Landau, *Out-Heroding Herod: Josephus, Rhetoric and the Herod Narratives*, Leiden 2006; A. Kasher, *King Herod: A Persecuted Persecutor. A Case Study in Psychohistory and Psychobiography*, Berlin 2007.

⁵ P. Richardson, *Herod. King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans*, Columbia 1996; M. Vogel, *Herodes. König der Juden, Freund der Römer*, Leipzig 2002; S. Japp, "Herodes—ein weiser König. Hintergründe seiner Herrschaftsideologie," *ZNT* 8 (2005), pp. 48-53.

⁶ The alternative position is argued for by, for example, G.M. Soares Prabhu, *The Formula Quotations in the Infancy Narrative of Matthew. An Enquiry into the Tradition History of Mt 1-2*, Rome 1976, pp. 259 and 298; R. T. France, "Herod and the Children of Bethlehem," *NovT* 21 (1979), pp. 98-120, esp. 119-120; Schalit, *König Herodes*, p. 648 n. 11; P. Stuhlmacher, *Die Geburt des Immanuel. Die Weihnachtsgeschichten aus dem Lukas- und Matthäusevangelium*, Göttingen 2005, p. 85. The suggestion that the correspondences between Matthew and Josephus imply that the murder of the innocents is historical is unconvincing, because Josephus clearly makes Herod appear in an unfavourable light. See also U. Luz, *Matthew 1-7. A Continental Commentary*, Minneapolis 1989, p. 145; D.J. Paul, "Untypische" Texte im Matthäusevangelium? *Studien zu Charakter, Funktion und Bedeutung einer Textgruppe des matthäischen Sonderguts*, Münster 2005, pp. 35 and 49.

the Where and Whence (chapter 2) of Jesus' birth.⁷ Chapter 2 is, perhaps, based on two oral sources, a story about the astrologers' journey to Bethlehem and a tradition about Herod's response to the announcement of the birth of a new king.⁸ This hypothesis is plausible but cannot be proven: if Matthew based himself on sources, he must have recrafted them so carefully that they cannot be reconstructed.⁹ The entire passage of Matthew 2 displays typically Matthean vocabulary.¹⁰ There are constant repetitions of the vocabulary and Old Testament fulfilment quotations conclude three sections (2:15, 18, 23).¹¹ The frequent changes of location enhance the dramatic character of the events narrated.¹² Furthermore, Matthew welded the sections of this chapter together into a coherent unit by several strong connections.¹³ The passage's cohesion is enhanced by the figure of Herod the Great (40/37-4 BCE); although he is not the main character, he does appear in every section. Herod's murder of the infants is the main example of his role in Matt. 2:1-23 and is an integral element of the narrative.¹⁴

Chapter 2 can be divided into four sections on the basis of changes of time and place as well as switches of subjects (I, 2:1-12; II, 2:13-15; III, 2:16-18 and IV, 2:19-23).¹⁵ The first and largest section (2:1-12) sets Jesus' birth in King Herod's reign (2:1; cf. Luke 3:5) and reports the visits of the astrologers to Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The first part of this section focuses on the interaction between Herod and the astrologers in Jerusalem (2:1-8); the second part describes the sages' homage to the newborn "child" in Bethlehem (2:9-12).

The references to Herod in Matthew 2 can be summarized as follows. The mention of Jerusalem in Matt. 2:1 implies, at least for in-

⁷ R.E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah. A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke*, London 1977, pp. 53-54, 179.

⁸ Soares Prabhu, *Formula Quotations*, pp. 297-298. Further discussion and references: W.D. Davies/D.C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* 1, Edinburgh 1988, pp. 190-195.

⁹ Paul, "Untypische" Texte, p. 17. Differently: Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, pp. 104-121; 190-196.

¹⁰ Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, pp. 102, 129-130, 143-145.

¹¹ M.J.J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible. The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist*, Leuven 2004, pp. 161-178, convincingly argues that 2:23 contains a brief quotation of Judg. 13:5, 7.

¹² Paul, "Untypische" Texte, pp. 16-17.

¹³ For example, 2:13-23 bears on 2:1-12; Paul, "Untypische" Texte, p. 41.

¹⁴ France, "Herod," p. 103.

¹⁵ With Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, pp. 129 and 142-143; Paul, "Untypische" Texte, pp. 16 and 41.

formed readers, that Herod was King of Judea (cf. 2:22 about Archelaus as Herod's successor and Luke 1:5). Nevertheless, the absence of explicit information about Herod's kinship in Matt. 2:1-2 may not be accidental, since the astrologers refer to the newborn king as "King of the Jews [or: Judeans]" when they arrive at court (Matt. 2:2).¹⁶ The omission may contribute to the contrast that Matthew constructs in chapter 2 between Herod and Jesus as kings (below). The astrologers' question about the child (2:2) upsets Herod as well as "all Jerusalem," adding to the contrast between Jesus and Herod as suggested in 2:1-2, while also anticipating Jesus' crucifixion in Jerusalem.¹⁷ The passive verbal form ἐταράχθη (2:3) can indicate that Herod was frightened¹⁸ or that he was disturbed by the astrologers' question.¹⁹ Herod reacts to the threat of a newborn competitor by convening (συναγαγόν) an assembly of the chief priests and the scribes of the Jewish people (2:4).²⁰ Several scholars suggest that this was a meeting of the Sanhedrin, although the reference to the chief priests and the scribes of the people is slightly peculiar in that connection.²¹ It is doubtful whether the Sanhedrin already existed in Herod's times,²² but Josephus reports several assemblies convened by Herod when he needed advice or support concerning important matters, including cases in which he wanted to get rid of an opponent.²³ Herod's question about the location of the birth of his rival is remarkable, because it suggests that he interprets the events correctly and was well informed about the birth of the Messiah.

¹⁶ See for Herod as "King of the Jews," Josephus, *War* I 282; *Ant.* XIV 9; XV 373, 409.

¹⁷ See also 2:4 and cf. Matt. 27:11, 25, 29, 37, 42; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, pp. 135-136.

¹⁸ E.g. Bauer/Aland 1606 *sv* ταρασσω 2.

¹⁹ D. Bauer, "The Kingship of Jesus in the Matthean Infancy Narrative: A Literary Analysis," *CBO* 57 (1995), pp. 306-323, esp. 316; see also below section 3. The other occurrence of the verb ταρασσω in Matthew (14:26) derives from the parallel passage in Mark (6:50).

²⁰ Συναγω frequently goes together with a noun as object referring to a specific council, e.g. συνέδριον (Diodorus Siculus XVII 4.2; XVII 20.1), γερονσίαν (Exod. 3:16LXX; Josephus, *Ant.* V 332) or ἐκκλησίαν (Acts 14:27), *LSJ* 1691-1692 *sv* 1.2; Bauer/Aland 1561-1562 *sv* 2. This passage may anticipate Matthew's Passion Narrative, where συναγω occurs in passive forms (26:3, 57; 27:17, 57; cf. 28:12).

²¹ Brown, *Birth of the Messiah*, p. 175.

²² A.J. Saldařini, "Sanhedrin," *ABD* 5, pp. 975-980, esp. 976; J.S. McLaren, *Power and Politics in Palestine: The Jews and the Governing of their Land 100 B.C.-A.D. 70*, Sheffield 1991, pp. 74-77.

²³ See section 3.

Having found out the location of the birth (2:5-6, 8), Herod secretly summons the astrologers to learn the precise time of the star's appearance (2:7-8, 16). This implies a double strategy: Herod combines officially acknowledged actions with secret missions, which could not be publicly known. This matches Josephus' description of the king's actions in the *Jewish Antiquities*.²⁴ Matt. 2:8 suggests that Herod's motive for the astrologer's mission was honourable, but the narratees may already doubt this because of the secrecy of the operation. The continuation of the narrative confirms this doubt (2:13-18).

Dream appearances prevent the astrologers from returning to Herod (2:12) and instruct Joseph to go, with the child and his mother, to Egypt, and subsequently to return to the Land of Israel (2:13, 19). Matt. 2:13 reveals Herod's strategy in plain words: "for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him (ζητεῖν τὸ παιδίον τοῦ ἀπολέσαι αὐτό)." Herod's murderous intention becomes apparent in 2:16 and is highlighted again in 2:20, which partly repeats the vocabulary of 2:13: "those who were seeking the child's life are dead (τεθνήκασιν γὰρ οἱ ζητοῦντες τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ παιδίου)." Matt. 2:16 briefly reports the brutal killing of the infants in Bethlehem. This verse and its immediate context characterise Herod as a wicked tyrant. Matthew's description presents the murder as a sequence of three moments, which together indicate Herod's brutal behaviour:

- (1) Herod realized that he had been ridiculed (ἐνεπαίχθη) by the astrologers.
- (2) He became extremely angry (ἐθυμώθη λίαν).
- (3) He sent [soldiers]²⁵ to kill (ἀποστεῖλας ἀνεῖλεν) all the children of two years and under.

The first statement of Matt. 2:16 is connected with the notification in 2:12 that the astrologers did not return to Herod, but also with 2:7-8 by several repetitions of the vocabulary.²⁶ The passive ἐνεπαίχθη can

²⁴ Cf. Josephus' report about Jonathan-Aristobulus III's death, secretly arranged by Herod in *Ant.* XV 50-56 (below, section 3). Cf. *Ant.* XV 366-367; XVI 236; France, "Herod," p. 116.

²⁵ Visual representations of Matt. 2:16 often suggest that Herod was present during the murder, this is not indicated by the text, although he was clearly responsible for it: Paul, "Untypische" Texte, p. 48.

²⁶ See ἠκριβώσεν (2:7, 16), τὸν χρόνον (2:7, 16), τοὺς μάγους (2:7) and τῶν μάγων (2:16 twice), Βηθλέεμ (2:8, 16).

either mean “tricked”²⁷ or “ridiculed” in this context.²⁸ Matthew uses the verb again in the Passion Narrative in connection with the mocking of Jesus (Matt. 27:29, 31, 41; cf. 20:19). A description of the actual ridiculing of Herod is missing in Matthew 2, and the meaning “tricking” may, therefore, be slightly more probable in 2:16. Nevertheless, the result for Herod remains the same for both meanings: Herod felt that the astrologers had made a fool of him by not obeying him. His furious anger about the astrologers’ disappearance as well as his subsequent decision to have the infants in Bethlehem killed match the stereotypical behaviour of wicked tyrants.²⁹ Important for our discussion is that all three motifs (humiliating experience, excessive anger and murder) are part of Herod’s portrayal in the *Jewish Antiquities* (below, section 3). The quotation of Jer. 31:15 in Matt. 2:18, introduced by 2:17, emphasises the gravity of Herod’s crime.³⁰ It also enhances the drama of this heartbreaking scene by staging an inconsolable Rachel as ancestress of Israel.³¹

Two more details in Matthew 2 are relevant for our survey. Matt. 2:15, 19-20 refer to Herod’s death (ἕως τῆς τελευτῆς Ἡρώδου; τελευτήσαντος δὲ τοῦ Ἡρώδου; τεθνήκασιν γάρ ...).³² The king died, according to the majority view, a few days after Nisan 1 in 4 BCE.³³

²⁷ Bauer/Aland 561 sv ἐμπαίζω 2. Closely related meanings are “mock,” “make a sport of” (2 Macc. 7:10); G. Bertram, “παίζω κτλ.,” *TWNT* 5, p. 632; J. Lust/E. Eynikel/K. Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* 1, Stuttgart 1992, p. 146.

²⁸ Bauer, “Kingship of Jesus,” pp. 309, 322.

²⁹ Uncontrolled anger: e.g. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 1 81; Suetonius, *Cal.* 12; cf. Horace, *Epist.* 1 2; 2 Macc. 7:3, 39; 4 Macc. 9:10. Murder of relatives and others is a recurrent motif in passages about wicked tyrants, e.g. Herodotus III 1-38, 61-66 (Cambyses); III 39-47, 54-60, 120-128, 142 (Polycrates); Livy 1 46-60 (L. Tarquinius Superbus), Suetonius, *Nero*; Suetonius, *Domitian*; H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen* 1, Darmstadt 1967, pp. 479-480. Dio Chrysostom concludes his description of tyranny in his first discourse on kingship as follows: “And instead of Friendship, Flattery was there, servile and avaricious and no less ready for treachery than any of the others, nay rather, zealous above all to destroy (μάλιστα δὲ πάντων ἀπολέσαι ζητοῦσα)” (*Or.* 1 83). “He will kill both old and young and spare no one” in *As. Mos.* 6:4 is often taken as a reference to Herod the Great (e.g. France, “Herod,” p. 117), but this passage does not explicitly refer to Herod; discussion in J. Tromp, *The Assumption of Moses. A Critical Edition with Commentary*, Leiden 1993, p. 201.

³⁰ Paul, “*Untypische*” *Texte*, p. 50.

³¹ Detailed discussion of the references in this quotation as well as the biblical text used by Matthew (a revised LXX text) can be found in Menken, *Matthew’s Bible*, pp. 143-159.

³² Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* XVII 211: καὶ τελευτῆς αὐτῷ γενομένης; XVII 199: Ἡρώδης μὲν δὴ τοῦτον ἐτελεύτα τὸν τρόπον. See also *War* I 588; II 27, 88; *Ant.* XVII 53, 58.

³³ E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)* 1 (rev. and ed. G. Vermes/F. Millar/M. Goodman), Edinburgh 1973, pp. 294, 326-328;

This matches the lunar eclipse and the Passover Feast mentioned by Josephus in the context of his report about Herod's last days (Josephus, *War* II 10; *Ant.* XVII 167; 213-214). There was a lunar eclipse in Palestine in the night of March 12/13 in 4 BCE, therefore implying that Herod died on one of the days between this eclipse and the Passover festival of 4 BCE. The last reference to Herod's death in Matt. 2:20, "for those who were seeking the child's life are dead," again emphasises that the travels of the Holy Family narrated in 2:13-23 were necessary because of Herod's plan to kill the child (cf. 2:13, 15 and 2:22).³⁴ The final reference to Herod in Matthew 2 is as the father of his successor as ruler of Judea, Archelaus (2:22). Joseph was afraid of him and had a warning dream (cf. 2:12, 13, 19), so he travelled to Nazareth in Galilee instead of Judea. This suggests an analogy between Herod and Archelaus: Archelaus was as bad and dangerous as his father was. As we will see, this bears a striking similarity to Josephus' reports (below, section 3).

If we combine all references to Herod in Matthew 2, the king's image turns out to be complex. Herod is surprisingly well informed about the coming of the Messiah. His plan to get the astrologers to do his dirty work is shrewd and naïve at the same time, because he opposes the Kingdom of God.³⁵ God's interventions through warnings in dreams prevent Herod from finding out the actual birthplace of his rival.³⁶ Matt. 2:16 reveals Herod's true colours: in his fury about the humiliating behaviour of the astrologers he decides to murder all of Bethlehem's small infants in order to eliminate his rival. This characterises the king as a self-centred ruler who tries to remain in power at all costs, in short, a cruel tyrant who opposes God's plan for humankind. Matthew creates a double contrast in this way: (1) Herod versus the astrologers, who, contrary to Herod pay due respect to the newly born king; and (2) Herod versus Jesus. The latter contrast helps to introduce the meaning of Jesus' kingship, which is articu-

Schalit, *König Herodes*, pp. 638, 643. A slightly earlier date is argued for by Van Bruggen by counting Herod's regnal years with Tishri 1 as the point of departure instead of Nisan 1: see J. van Bruggen, "The Year of the Death of Herod the Great (Τελευτήσαντος δὲ τοῦ Ἡρώδου..., Matthew ii 19)," in: T. Baarda/A.F.J. Klijn/W.C. van Unnik (eds), *Miscellanea Neotestamentica* 2, Leiden 1978, pp. 1-15. See also his survey of other hypotheses concerning this date.

³⁴ France, "Herod," p. 102.

³⁵ Bauer, "Kingship of Jesus," p. 315.

³⁶ Davies/Allison, *Commentary* 1, pp. 251-252; France, "Herod," p. 115; Bauer, "Kingship of Jesus," pp. 308-309, 314-315; Paul, "Untypische" Texte, pp. 49-51.

ated in later passages: it is a Davidic kingship through the connection with Bethlehem (2:1, 6, 8); and Jesus is a shepherd-like king (2:6) as well as the royal Son of God (2:15).³⁷ Finally, the addition of "all Jerusalem" to the contrast between Herod and Jesus (2:3) and Herod's assembly of the chief priests and scribes (2:4) also anticipates the Passion Narrative by hinting at Jesus' Jewish opponents in his final days.³⁸

2. *Herod as a Wicked Tyrant in Josephus*

There are considerable differences between Josephus' Herod portrayals in the *Jewish War* and the *Jewish Antiquities*.³⁹ Depictions of Herod as a wicked tyrant are rare in the *War* and explicit vocabulary connected with the semantic field of τύραννοι and related words is absent in this work, with one or two exceptions (below). Clusters of motifs inherent to the stereotype of wicked tyrants are also missing in the *War*.⁴⁰ In the *Jewish War* Josephus offers just a few scattered hints that might suggest that Herod behaved like a tyrant, but these concern a single event or represent the perspective of an unfriendly character in the narrative. For example, Herod's executions of his wife Mariamme and their two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, are taken up in a later passage concerning the testimony of female slaves who were put to torture and testified against Antipater, another son of Herod. The women testified that Antipater and Herod's brother Pheroras, who were scheming against Herod, would have said to each other that:

... after Alexander and Aristobulus, Herod would go after them and their wives. For after (what he did to) Mariamme and her offspring, he would spare no one. It would be better, then, to flee as far away as

³⁷ Bauer, "Kingship of Jesus," pp. 307-314; Paul, "Untypische" Texte, pp. 33-34.

³⁸ See above and Bauer, "Kingship of Jesus," pp. 315-317.

³⁹ Landau, *Out-Heroding Herod*, pp. 69-202, rightly differentiates between Josephus' two works in her analysis, which is largely based on the excurses of both Herod narratives.

⁴⁰ See for a more detailed discussion J.W. van Henten, "Constructing Herod as a Tyrant: Assessing Josephus' Parallel Passages" (forthcoming).

possible from the beast (φεύγειν ὡς πορρωτάτω τοῦ θηρίου) (*War* I 586; cf. *Ant.* XVII 66-67).⁴¹

The women also reported the following statement by Antipater to Pheroras: "... It is impossible, however, to escape from such a blood-thirsty beast (ἐκφυγεῖν οὕτω φονικὸν θηρίον), in whose eyes we do not even have the right to show our affection for anyone..." (*War* I 589). These passages suggest, by way of exception and from the perspective of Herod's opponents, that Herod was a monster because he murdered his own wife and her two sons.

One other passage in the *Jewish War* depicts Herod as a tyrant and transmits the opinion of the opponents of Herod and Archelaus after Herod's death (*War* II 84-92). The context of this flashback is the visit of Archelaus and Antipas, Herod's competing sons, to Rome to acquire the throne of Judaea from the emperor (4 BCE). While they were waiting for Augustus' decision about Herod's succession, Jewish petitioners went to the emperor and pleaded for Archelaus' deposition. They preferred Roman suzerainty to a Herodian ruler as long as they were able to live in accordance with Jewish practices. Surprisingly, their main argument does not concern Archelaus: it is a summary of Herod's wicked deeds described in a highly dramatic tone. The accusation against Herod lists countless murders, torture of the survivors, destruction of the cities of the Jews, benefactions to non-Jews at the expense of the Jews ("he had shed Jewish blood to gratify foreign people"), poverty and unlawfulness (*War* II 84-86).⁴² The accusation is introduced and concluded with characterizations of the former king as a tyrant, actually as the worst tyrant ever. The *War* renders the following statement of the petitioners for the emperor: "declaring that it was not to a king that they had submitted but *to the most savage tyrant that had ever lived* (τῶν πώποτε τυραννησάντων

⁴¹ Cf. *Ant.* XVII 309: "Such outrage Herod had inflicted upon them; a wild animal (θηρίον) could not have accomplished as much after it had come by the power to rule over humans." Also *War* I 493-494.

⁴² The content of the more elaborate parallel passage of *War* II 84-92, *Ant.* XVII 304-314, is not very different, this passage also refers to tyranny at the beginning of the petitioners' accusation: "When the delegates of the Jews, who were eagerly looking forward to arguing for the dissolution of the kingdom, were permitted to speak, they turned to accuse Herod of lawless acts. They declared him a king only in name and claimed that he had agreed to take upon himself the ruinous task, like in every tyranny (τῶν δ' ἐν ταῖς τυραννίσιν ἐκάσταις), of bringing about the destruction of the Jews. He had not left off from inventing all kinds of new measures that matched his character." (*Ant.* XVII 304)

ὀμώτατον ἐνηνοχέναι τύραννον)” (*War* II 84).⁴³ After these accusations against Herod, Archelaus is called “the son of that cruel tyrant (τὸν τηλικούτου τυράννου παῖδα)” (II 88). This accusation only makes sense if the underlying reasoning of the petitioners was that Archelaus was as bad as his father.⁴⁴

Three observations help to nuance the portrayal of Herod in this passage. First, as indicated already, the severe accusation of tyranny conveys the opinion of Herod’s former opponents. Second, the accusation during the petition to the emperor turns out to be a gross exaggeration if we compare it with Herod’s deeds as reported by Josephus in the *Jewish War*. Third, Josephus reports that Nicolaus of Damascus successfully countered the accusations by reproaching the Jewish people for being hard to govern and disobedient by nature (τό τε δύσαρκτον καὶ τὸ δυσπειθὲς φύσει πρὸς τοὺς βασιλεῖς, II 92).⁴⁵ Nicolaus’ rebuttal is clearly also a gross overstatement. Significantly, Josephus quickly disposes of Nicolaus’ counter argument, but he emphasises the anti-Herodian accusation in this flashback of Herod’s rule. This implies that Josephus the narrator sides with Herod’s opponents here, and for once depicts Herod as a tyrant in the *Jewish War*.

Josephus presents Herod as a tyrant much more elaborately in his *Jewish Antiquities*. A double narrative strategy seems to underlie the Herod report in this later work. First, brief passages associate Herod with tyranny from the earliest stage of his career onwards. Most of these short passages reflect the perspective of certain characters in the narrative, but Josephus seems to side as narrator with these characters. Second, Josephus highlights Herod’s tyrannical image in the section about Herod’s last period, climaxing with the Golden Eagle section (*Ant.* XVII 148-164).

The first brief passage in the *Jewish Antiquities* that hints at Herod being a tyrant is quite relevant for the discussion of Matt. 2:16.⁴⁶ It concerns killing persons without a trial and depicts Herod as a mur-

⁴³ Savagery is a common characteristic of wicked tyrants; Berve, *Tyrannis* 1, pp. 476-509. Cf. 2 Macc. 7:4; 4 Macc. 9:15, 30; 12:13.

⁴⁴ This is also implied by the references to Archelaus’ killing of 3000 citizens in *War* II 89; *Ant.* XVII 313, see section 3.

⁴⁵ It is remarkable that Josephus does not specify who the petitioners are in *War* II 84-92.

⁴⁶ Other brief passages that associate Herod with tyranny focus on Herod’s harsh measures against the Gadarenes (*Ant.* XV 354), his tyrannical attitude to his spouses and his relatives as well as to women in general (*Ant.* XV 70, 222, 321-322; cf. XVII 309), and his harsh adaptations of the Jewish laws (*Ant.* XVI 1-5).

derer. After his appointment as governor of Galilee by his father Antipater, Herod decided to attack Ezekias and his fellows, a bunch of brigands who were active near the Syrian border (*Ant.* XIV 159; cf. *War* I 204). Herod killed them without a trial, as his opponents later hold against him. The aftermath of the *Antiquities* report of Herod's assault on Ezekias and his fellow-brigands (*Ant.* XIV 158-184) associates the young Herod with tyranny.⁴⁷ The most prominent Jews complained to Hyrcanus II and accused Antipater that he and his sons had exceeded their authority. Their main target appeared to be Herod (*Ant.* XIV 163-168). They recalled Herod's unlawful execution of Ezekias and his men, which was neither authorized by Hyrcanus nor by the "Sanhedrin" (XIV 167).⁴⁸ Their accusations and the dramatic daily appeals in the Temple by the mothers of the murdered brigands (XIV 168) made Hyrcanus put Herod on trial (XIV 168-178).⁴⁹

Josephus notes in *Ant.* XIV 177 that the members of the Sanhedrin intended to have Herod executed. He provides conflicting information about Herod's acquittal or escape from the trial,⁵⁰ but one sentence that leads up to the accusation against Herod is particularly relevant here. It demonstrates the fear that the leading Jews felt about the power of Antipater and his sons: "But the chief Jews were in great fear when they saw *how violent and bold Herod was, and how much he longed to rule as a tyrant* (ὁρῶντες τὸν Ἡρώδην βίαιον καὶ τολμηρὸν καὶ τυραννίδος γλιχόμενον)" (*Ant.* XIV 165). Illegal executions are more often associated with tyranny,⁵¹ but Josephus does not elaborate upon his statement, which is put forward by a group of Herod's opponents. Nevertheless, the position of this statement at the very beginning of the narrative about Herod's career, as well as the suggestive vocabulary ("violent," βίαιος, "bold," τολμηρός, and "longing for a rule as a tyrant"), implies a proleptic function for this passage. It reads as a marker for Herod's characterization: to some

⁴⁷ Book 15 features three flashbacks to this episode (*Ant.* XV 2, 4, 18).

⁴⁸ The reference to the Synhedrion/Sanhedrin is unique to the *Antiquities* report. *Ant.* XIV 167 implies that the execution of every person, even a criminal, had to be brought before this court. The Pentateuch already indicates these requirements for a trial (Deut. 1:16-17, 19:15-21; cf. Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:2-8), but the Sanhedrin as a permanent Jewish supreme court probably did not exist in the period described by Josephus, see n. 22.

⁴⁹ This detail is rather implausible, the mothers were, in fact, living near the Syrian border. Jerusalemites would not have shed tears over the death of robbers near the Syrian border.

⁵⁰ *Ant.* XIV 170, 177, 182 and *War* I 211.

⁵¹ See, for example, Herodotus III 80-83; Livy I 49.4-5.

Jews, at least, Herod was a violent and very dangerous person from the beginning of his public performance onward. In their opinion he was violent and bold by nature, and his ambition was to rule as a tyrant. This reading is confirmed later on in the narrative, during the flashback to Herod's rule when Archelaus, Antipas and other Jews were addressing Augustus (*War* II 84-92; *Ant.* XVII 304-314, above). Jewish representatives argued before the emperor that Herod "had not left off from inventing all kinds of new measures that matched his character (τοῦ πολλὰ καὶ φύσει τῇ αὐτοῦ προσκαινουργεῖν οὐκ ἀπηλλαγμένον)" (*Ant.* XVII 304). The suggestion that Herod's tyrannical deeds matched his character implies once again that Herod was a tyrant by nature.

The most elaborate passage that explicitly depicts Herod as a tyrant in the *Jewish Antiquities* concerns the report about the demolition of Herod's golden eagle at the end of his rule (*Ant.* XVII 148-164; cf. *War* I 648-655; II 5-7). Two sages and a group of youths considered the eagle a horrendous violation of God's second commandment and they paid for the destruction of this symbol with their lives.⁵² Josephus' introduction to the story immediately characterises Herod as a tyrant and recalls Matthew's description of Herod:

Because he had given up hope of recovering—for he was around his seventieth year—, *he became enraged* (ἐξηγρίωσεν) and *handled everything with pure anger and bitterness* (ἀκράτῳ τῇ ὀργῇ καὶ πικρίᾳ εἰς πάντα).⁵³ The reason was *his conviction that he was despised* (... δόξα τοῦ καταφρονεῖσθαι) and that the (Jewish) people took pleasure in his misfortune, especially because some of the more highly respected persons among the people rebelled against him for the following reason. (*Ant.* XVII 148)

The conclusion of the report describes the attitude of the members of the assembly that discussed the punishment of the rebels. It refers again to Herod's rage (ἐξαγριώσας)⁵⁴ and cruelty (ὠμότης):⁵⁵

⁵² Discussion of the entire episode is in J.W. van Henten, "Ruler or God? The Demolition of Herod's Eagle," in: J. Fotopoulos (ed.), *New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context. Studies in Honor of David E. Aune*, Leiden 2006, pp. 257-286.

⁵³ Herod's bitterness is referred to a few times elsewhere, for example in connection with his taxes (*War* I 494, II 87; *Ant.* XVI 235; cf. XVII 205).

⁵⁴ Similar vocabulary characterises the emperor Gaius (*Ant.* XIX 27). See also Sentius Saturninus' tirade against tyrants (*Ant.* XIX 175).

⁵⁵ Cf. *Ant.* XVIII 282 about Gaius' anger and bitterness; also *Ant.* XIX 130.

Because of his cruelty, and their fear that in his outrage he would exact vengeance on them, those present said that these things had been done without their approval. It also seemed to them that they [the rebels] should not go unpunished ... (*Ant.* XVII 164)

The introduction and conclusion of the golden eagle episode in the *Antiquities* narrative (XVII 148, 164) highlight Herod's character with tyrannical stereotypes. Josephus suggests that Herod's tyrannical nature became fully apparent at the end of his life, after he had become seriously ill (*Ant.* XVII 148).⁵⁶ The golden eagle narrative of the *Antiquities* underlines that Herod was a tyrannical ruler by emphasizing that the king abolished the ancestral customs. Josephus creates a contrast between the two sages who inspired the youths to demolish the eagle and Herod. The sages are consistently associated with the ancestral laws; they are introduced as interpreters of these laws (ἐξηγηταὶ τῶν πατρίων νόμων, *Ant.* XVII 149).⁵⁷ The sages educated the young to live a virtuous life (XVII 149; cf. 2 Macc. 6:24-28) and to remain faithful to the Jewish laws. The youths could consider their cause as being entrusted to them by God (τοῦ τε γὰρ θεοῦ τῇ ἀξιώσει πεπιστευμένα, *Ant.* XVII 158). The sages pointed out that Herod's misfortune, and especially his illness, was the result of his boldness (τόλμα) in constructing things against the law's prohibition (XVII 150).⁵⁸ One of the youths' statements to Herod during the interrogation after their arrest confirms this contrast: "It is not at all surprising *if we consider the preservation of the laws*, which Moses left behind in writing ... *to be more important than your decrees*" (*Ant.* XVII 159).⁵⁹ So, faithfulness to the ancestral laws (οἱ πατέριοι νόμοι) is highlighted in the *Antiquities*' version of the story (XVII 149, 150, 151, 152, 159).⁶⁰ The contrast between the opposite positions of the Jewish ancestral laws, which were identical to the

⁵⁶ The aftermath of the eagle episode with Herod's very cruel plan for a mass execution in the Jericho hippodrome to ensure extensive mourning after his death also confirms Herod's tyrannical character (*Ant.* XVII 173-181; cf. *War* I 659-660).

⁵⁷ The noun ἐξηγητής, "expounder, interpreter" occurs three times in Josephus, only in the *Antiquities* and always referring to the two sages (XVII 147, 214, 216); K.H. Rengstorff, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus* 2, Leiden 1975, p. 122.

⁵⁸ The *Antiquities* emphasize elsewhere that Herod initiated new practices that resulted in transgressions of the ancestral Jewish laws (e.g. *Ant.* XV 268, 274-275, 276, 277, 284; XVII 304).

⁵⁹ This contrast is missing in the parallel narrative in the *Jewish War* (I 653).

⁶⁰ It is mentioned only once in the parallel narrative in the *Jewish War* (I 653).

laws of Moses, and Herod's decrees (δόγματα) suggests in XVII 159 that Herod treated his subjects as a foreign ruler.⁶¹

3. *Interconnections Between Herod's Portrayals in Matthew and Josephus*

All motifs of Matthew's brief references to Herod have a match in Josephus' much more elaborate portrayals of Herod. Moreover, several of Matthew's phrases concerning Herod have close parallels to Josephus' vocabulary referring to Herod. The correspondences are closest in the *Jewish Antiquities*.

The first phrase from Matthew 2 that is similar to Josephus' vocabulary is ἐταράχθη "he was frightened" or "he was disturbed" in Matt. 2:3. The verb ταράσσω and related phrases occur in both of Josephus' Herod narratives, but Josephus particularly uses them in the *Antiquities* to describe Herod's typical response to events that disturb him as a potential threat to his rule. There is just one relevant occurrence in the *War*; it concerns the overture to the tantalizing and brief report about Mariamme's execution (*War* I 438-444). Mariamme had upbraided her husband and insulted Herod's sister Salome and his mother after the death of her brother Jonathan-Aristobulus in one of the royal swimming pools at Jericho (*War* I 437; cf. *Ant.* XV 50-56). The *Antiquities* implies that the king had ordered this murder because he considered the young and popular Hasmonaean high priest a possible competitor (*Ant.* XV 50, 52, 60; cf. XV 18, 20-22), while the *War* only hints at Herod's jealousy (*War* I 437). Herod's sister and mother effectively retaliated against Mariamme's insults by accusing her of adultery: Mariamme would have sent her portrait to Herod's patron Antony (*War* I 438-439). This accusation greatly disturbed Herod: "This struck Herod like a thunderbolt and perturbed him (ἐτάραξεν), most especially because his passion made him jealous (*War* I 440).

The much more extensive and complex report of this episode in *Antiquities* XV 57-87 conveys a similar accusation against Mariamme, this time involving her caretaker Joseph (*Ant.* XV 81). Herod's response is similar to that in the *War*:

⁶¹ Cf. *War* II 86.

Herod was always hot-headed about Mariamme and loved her terribly, so immediately, he was greatly disturbed (ἐτετάρακτο) and could not bear having a rival (τὴν ζηλοτυπίαν οὐκ ἔφερεν),⁶² but he always controlled himself not to do something rash because of his love. With intense emotions, and provoked by his jealousy, he questioned Mariamme in private about her affair with Joseph (*Ant.* XV 82).

The motif of Herod's rivalry is elaborated another way in the *Antiquities*. The king increasingly considered his sons by Mariamme as his rivals; this ultimately led to their execution (*Ant.* XVI 392-394; cf. *War* I 550-551). One of the relevant passages depicts Herod's response to Pheroras' and Salome's accusation against his sons: they accused Aristobulus and Alexander of being unable to leave their mother's execution unavenged and suggesting that they would call upon King Archelaus of Cappadocia for help. Josephus describes the king's response as follows: "Hearing such things, Herod was immediately disturbed (Ἡρώδης δὲ ἐτετάρακτο μὲν εὐθὺς ἀκούσας τοιούτων), and he was even more shocked that some others were also reporting this" (*Ant.* XVI 75). The possible threat to Herod's rule from his own sons forms the background of this passage. Josephus' vocabulary in this passage is rather close to the statement at the beginning of Matt. 2:3 (passive form of ταρασσώ plus the participle ἀκούσας).⁶³

Herod's next step in Matthew, convening an assembly of prominent Jews (Matt. 2:4, συναγαγών), is part of Herod's usual actions that lead to the execution of rivals or persons belonging to his family or entourage.⁶⁴ A telling example concerns Herod's execution of his own wife. The story that leads to Mariamme's death is told at length in the *Antiquities* and it comes to a dramatic climax after Herod's return from a crucial meeting with Octavian (*Ant.* XV 185-187, 202-239).⁶⁵ Mariamme was framed by Herod's sister Salome (XV 223-239), who used the king's cupbearer to raise suspicions that the queen had attempted to poison Herod with a drug that was supposed

⁶² Cf. *War* I 440, διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα ζηλοτύπως ἔχοντα.

⁶³ Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* XVI 78 about Herod being disturbed by his sons. Similar phrases referring to Herod: *War* I 328; *Ant.* XV 210, 223-224; XVI 197, 208, 259, 261, 265, 385.

⁶⁴ Matthew's specific reference to the chief priests and the scribes may have been prompted by his endeavour to present Herod's attempt to eliminate the rival king as foreshadowing of Jesus' passion (above, section 1).

⁶⁵ Mariamme's death is, therefore, dated ca. 29 BCE according to the *Antiquities*; see the elaborate discussion in Schalit, *König Herodes*, pp. 114-116, 132-138 and 575-588.

to be a love-potion. Mariamme herself was devastated by Herod's orders to have her killed by her caretaker Soemus in case the king would not return from his trip to Octavian. She refused to lie down with Herod and her motivation focuses on her reproach that the king was a murderer of his own relatives:

When the king was laying down to rest at noon, he called for Mariamme out of the affection he always felt for her. She did come in, but did not lie down, although he urged her to. She poured contempt on him and railed that he had killed her father and her brother. (*Ant.* XV 222)⁶⁶

As a matter of fact, Mariamme's accusation that Herod had murdered his own relatives anticipated her own execution. Herod decided that Soemus had to be executed on the spot, but he arranged a trial for Mariamme, which could only lead to her execution (*Ant.* XV 229):

But he gave his wife a trial, having gathered his closest friends (συναγαγὼν τοῖς οἰκειτάτους αὐτῶν) and formulating a zealously pursued accusation about the love-potions, in line with the slanders, and the drugs.

Another example of the rivalry motif concerns Cleopatra VII, who consistently tried to take over his kingdom.⁶⁷ When Herod seriously thought about murdering Cleopatra, during her visit to Judea where she tried to seduce him (*Ant.* XV 88-103), he held counsel with his friends (XV 98-102). This time the friends prevented the king from murdering his opponent. Yet, we again find the usual procedure in the report about Hyrcanus II's end (*Ant.* XV 165-173; cf. XV 222). When Herod found out about Hyrcanus' plan to take refuge with the Nabatean King Malchus I, he convened a council after which Hyrcanus was executed (XV 173).⁶⁸

The correspondences between the vocabulary of Matt. 2:16 and Josephus' Herod account are less similar. However, the motif of Her-

⁶⁶ Two witnesses (MS L and E) read "grandfather" instead of "father," which is historically accurate because Herod brought about the execution of Mariamme's grandfather Hyrcanus II (*Ant.* XV 173).

⁶⁷ References in J.W. van Henten, "Cleopatra in Josephus: From Herod's Rival to the Wise Ruler's Opposite," in: A. Hilhorst/G.H. van Kooten (eds), *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian, and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuisen*, Leiden 2006, pp. 113-132.

⁶⁸ Further examples concern those who were responsible for the demolition of Herod's golden eagle (*War* I 654; *Ant.* XVII 160-164) and the trial of his sons Aristobulus and Alexander in Beiruth (*War* I 538: συνῆγε τὸ δικαστήριον; cf. *Ant.* XVI 356, 361). Cf. also *War* I 556: συναγαγὼν ... συγγενεῖς τε καὶ φίλους; *Ant.* XVI 62: συνήγαγεν ἐκκλησίαν πάνδημον.

od's experience of humiliation in Matt. 2:16 is part of the golden eagle episode in the *Antiquities* (above, section 2). Significantly, the introduction to the eagle story explains Herod's anger as a feeling that the people held him in contempt:⁶⁹ "The reason was his conviction that he was despised ..." (*Ant.* XVII 148).⁷⁰ Matt. 2:16 suggests a similar connection between Herod's feeling of humiliation and his great anger.

The second motif in Matt. 2:16 concerns Herod's great anger. Obviously, there are many references to Herod's anger in both the *War* and the *Antiquities*. Contrary to what one would expect, these passages do not allow for the conclusion that Herod behaved like a tyrant who did not always know where to draw the line.⁷¹ Herod's extreme anger towards Mariamme in the *War*, which led to the rash execution of her and her caretaker (*War* I 443-444), was exceptional and caused by Mariamme's boldness and Herod's strong suspicions of adultery. Another exception concerns Herod's anger towards his sons Alexander and Aristobulus, which is a recurring motif in both works. One of these passages describes Herod's anger during the accusation of his sons in unmistakable words: "he showed the strongest signs of anger and savageness" (μέγιστα θυμοῦ καὶ ἀγριότητος ἐνεδίδου σημεῖα).⁷² In most cases, however, Herod was able to control his anger according to Josephus' presentation.⁷³ Importantly, in the *Antiquities*, this depiction changes at the end of Herod's life (above, section 2), which exactly matches the setting of Matt. 2:1-18.

The third motif of Matthew's brief depiction of Herod's tyrannical behaviour in 2:16 concerns the murder of the innocents. My discussion of Josephus' portrayals of Herod so far has shown that Josephus highlights Herod's murders of some of his closest relatives as well as

⁶⁹ Cf. Syllaeus' contempt for Herod (*War* I 633).

⁷⁰ Herod's feeling reminds one of the Greek King in the Maccabean martyrdoms. Antiochus IV suspected that he was held in contempt by the anonymous mother and her only remaining son when he tried to persuade the youngest son to accommodate to the Greek way of life by agreeing to eat pork (2 Macc. 7:24-31; cf. 4 Macc. 12).

⁷¹ *War* I 212, 214, 230, 252, 319-320, 443-444, 480, 484, 493, 507, 526, 565, 571, 590, 636, 654-655; *Ant.* XIV 180, 436; XV 83, 211, 214, 229; XVI 90, 199-200, 262, 268, 363, 366; XVII 50, 69, 83, 148, 191.

⁷² Cf. *War* I 526, where Herod's anger is provoked by the Spartan charlatan Eurycles, who supported Antipater's scheming against his brothers: "Still not fully recovered from the previous [revelations], the king became exasperated to the point of unrelenting anger... (εἰς ἀνήκεστον ὀργὴν ἐξαγριούται)." *Ant.* XIV 180, 436.

⁷³ See, for example, *War* I 320: κρατήσας δὲ τῇ ὀργῇ.

almost all of his potential competitors. It should once again be noted that this trait is especially elaborated upon in the *Antiquities*, where Josephus suggests that Herod's inclination to murder people was part of the king's tyrannical character (*Ant.* XIV 165; XVII 304). We have seen that Herod was responsible for the deaths of his wife Mariamme, their sons Aristobulus and Alexander, Mariamme's brother Jonathan-Aristobulus and her grandfather Hyrcanus II (above, section 3). Moreover, Herod's savagery and murderous behaviour is part of the passages in which opponents—and sometimes the narrator—characterize the king as a tyrant (*War* I 586, 589; II 84-92; *Ant.* XIV 165, 167-168; XVII 148, 164, 304-314). In *War* I 586, 589 female witnesses call Herod a bloodthirsty beast (section 2). The accusation of the Jewish representatives in Rome (above, section 2) confirms this image:

When it was permitted for the accusers to speak, they first went through Herod's criminality, saying that it was not a king they had endured, but the most savage tyrant of those who had ever yet exercised tyranny. At any rate, although a vast number had been dispatched by him, those left behind had suffered such things that they pronounced happy those who had perished. For he had tortured not only the bodies of his subjects but also the cities: though he had truly maimed his own [cities], he had arrayed those of the foreigners, and donated the blood of Judea to alien peoples. (*War* II 84-85)

As already indicated, *Ant.* XVII 304-314 repeats, and further elaborates, the accusations transmitted in *War* II 84-92. Josephus formulates the accusation of murder in the *Antiquities* as follows, again highlighting Herod's exceptional cruelty:

Many had perished indeed, in ways that have not been reported before this time. Yet, those who were still alive were much more unfortunate in their suffering than those who had died, not only because they grieved about the disasters they saw and had to cope with, but also because of the danger of losing their property. (*Ant.* XVII 305)

The final reference to Herod in Matthew concerns Archelaus, the king's son and successor in Judea (Matt. 2:22). The beginning of this verse focuses upon Joseph and reads: "But when he [Joseph] heard that Archelaus was ruling over (βασιλεύει) Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there ..." The Greek (βασιλεύει) suggests that Archelaus was king of Judea, like Herod had been, al-

though this is not entirely correct.⁷⁴ Archelaus had a lesser status than his father and was appointed ethnarch of Judea in 4 BCE (Josephus, *War* I 668; *Ant.* XVII 317). Nevertheless, Josephus also refers to Archelaus as a king in a more general way (*War* II 88; *Ant.* XVII 195, 224, 311; XVIII 93). More importantly, Joseph's fear remains unexplained in Matt. 2:22. The fear is simply presupposed and not motivated. The most obvious way to fill this gap in the narrative is to assume that Archelaus was as wicked as his father was. Indeed, Matthew may have based upon a tradition that Archelaus was a murderer like his father. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what the Jewish petitioners in Rome suggest in their accusation of Archelaus (*Ant.* XVII 311-313; cf. *War* II 88-89):

But Archelaus was afraid that he would not be believed to be a legitimate son of Herod. Without any delay, in fact very quickly, he introduced his intention to the Jewish people ... The first act shown to the citizens, as well as to the divinity, ended in the slaughter of three thousand fellow-Jews in the temple precinct. (*Ant.* XVII 312-313)

Like its parallel in the *Jewish War* this passage presents Archelaus' response to the rebellion during the very first days of his rule at the Passover festival, which could only be stopped by a severe military action (*War* II 8-13; *Ant.* XVII 213-218).⁷⁵ In short, Josephus' depiction of Archelaus clearly explains Joseph's fear.

Conclusion

The Herod references in Matthew 2 characterise the king as a cruel tyrant, who goes to the extreme to eliminate possible rivals. The negative traits of Herod are a contrast to Jesus as the true king. All motifs concerning Herod as well as several phrases referring to him in Matthew 2 are paralleled in Josephus' reports. However, it is important to differentiate between the Herod narratives in the *Jewish War* and the *Jewish Antiquities*. Apart from a few scattered hints (*War* I 493-494, 586, 589), the *Jewish War* only depicts Herod as a

⁷⁴ Bauer/Aland 273 sv βασιλεύς; Davies/Allison, *Commentary* I, p. 273.

⁷⁵ This protest is connected with the demolition of the golden eagle in both narratives. Josephus characterises the protest as a rebellion in the *War* and retains this to a certain extent in the *Antiquities*, which contradicts the very positive depiction of the perpetrators in the eagle report; van Henten, "Ruler or God," pp. 264-265; 270-271.

bloodthirsty tyrant in a flashback embedded in the narrative about Archelaus (*War* II 84-92). This flashback is elaborated in the *Antiquities* (XVII 304-314), with a small but principle difference: Herod was a tyrant by nature (XVII 304). From the Herod narrative itself in the *Antiquities* it is apparent that Herod's tyrannical character only became fully manifest at the end of his life during the golden eagle episode (*Ant.* XVII 148-164). Nevertheless, the passage about the execution of Ezekias and his fellow-brigands suggests that it was present from the beginning (*Ant.* XIV 165).

A comparison between Matthew and Josephus shows that the closest correspondences exist between Matthew 2 and the *Jewish Antiquities*. The motif of Herod being disturbed by the news about a competitor (Matt. 2:3) is paralleled by *Ant.* XVI 75, which concerns Herod's sons who supposedly wanted to take over their father's rule. Herod's reaction, to convene an assembly (Matt. 2:4), is particularly matched by parallels in the *Antiquities*, but the function of these assemblies is different: they do not concern the place where the Messiah was born, but function as the legitimization of the execution of Herod's opponents (*Ant.* XV 98-102, 173, 229; XVI 356, 361; also *War* I 538). Herod's perception that he was being humiliated led to furious anger (Matt. 2:16) is matched by the introduction to the golden eagle story (*Ant.* XVII 164), which is situated, like Matthew 2, in the final period of Herod's life. The *Antiquities* report further suggests that Herod had all of his possible competitors killed (*Ant.* XV 50-56, 173, 222; XVI 394; XVII 187; see also *War* I 437, 551, 664). The full-blown picture of Herod as a tyrant in the flashbacks to his rule during the petition to Augustus in Rome in 4 BCE (*War* II 84-92; *Ant.* XVII 304-314) highlights Herod's murderous behaviour (*War* II 84-85; *Ant.* XVII 305). Finally, the same flashbacks also indicate that Archelaus was a murderer like his father (*Ant.* XVII 311-313; also *War* II 88-89), which explains Joseph's fear in Matt. 2:22.

Matthew 2 is part of a trajectory that depicts Herod the Great in increasingly negative terms. The chapter shares with Josephus' flashbacks to Herod's rule the image of Herod as a bloodthirsty murderer and Archelaus as the spitting image of his father. The correspondences between Matthew and Josephus are not substantial enough to argue for interdependence, but it seems safe to assume that Matthew was familiar with the traditions about a tyrannical Herod that underlie Josephus' portrayal of him in the *Antiquities*. The closest correspon-

dences are found between Matthew 2 and the *Antiquities* report about Herod. The latter highlights Herod's feeling of humiliation and anger (*Ant.* XVII 148), and emphasises his strive to eliminate all possible rivals much more than the *Jewish War* does. The detail of the Murder of the Innocents seems to be an independent expansion of these traditions, but it fits the tendency to increasingly extend the victims of Herod's murderous behaviour, as is witnessed in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Augustus' famous pun based upon a play with the words $\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$ and $\zeta\grave{\epsilon}\varsigma$ and transmitted by Macrobius (ca. 400 CE) is a further development of this tradition because it combines Josephus' information with a paraphrase of Matt. 2:16: "When he heard that among the boys under the age of two years whom in Syria Herodes the king of the Jews had ordered to be put to death was the king's own son, he exclaimed: I'd rather be Herod's pig than Herod's son" (Macrobius, *Sat.* II 4.11); M. Stern, *Greek and Latin authors on Jews and Judaism. Edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentary 2*, Jerusalem 1980, pp. 665-666.

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MARK 16:8 AS A SATISFYING ENDING TO THE GOSPEL

Matthijs J. de Jong

The ending of Mark's gospel is often qualified as disappointing, open, or abrupt. This contribution aims to show that none of these qualifications is appropriate. It will be argued instead that Mark 16:8 is a satisfying ending to the gospel.

The first point to make is that 16:8 is indeed the ending of the gospel. Text-critically there is no doubt that the authentic text of Mark ends at 16:8.¹ Furthermore, the claim that the last words of 16:8, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ, cannot be the original ending of a book, has been decisively refuted.² Both grammatically and literarily 16:8 is a possible ending. There are no solid arguments for suggesting the authentic gospel of Mark had an ending different from 16:8.³ The mere wish for what some perceive as a more appropriate ending

¹ K. Aland, "Der Schluß des Markusevangeliums," in: M. Sabbe (ed.), *L'Évangile selon Marc. Tradition et rédaction*, Leuven 1988, pp. 435-470; P.L. Danove, *The End of Mark's Story. A Methodological Study*, Leiden 1993; R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark. A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Carlisle 2002, pp. 685-686.

² P.W. van der Horst, "Can a Book End with γάρ? A Note on Mark xvi.8," *JThS* 23 (1972), pp. 121-124 and others. See K.R. Iverson, "A Further Word on Final γάρ (Mark 16:8)," *CBQ* 68 (2006), pp. 79-94, for an overview of the discussion.

³ The minor agreement ἀπαγγέλλω (Matt. 28:8; Luke 24:9) is not evidence of a lost ending of Mark (F. Neirynck, "Marc. 16,1-8. Tradition et rédaction. Tombeau vide et angélophanie," in: *id.*, *Evangelica* 1 [ed. F. Van Segbroeck], Leuven 1982, pp. 239-272; esp. 261-263; R.H. Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, London 1971, p. 100; cf. Aland, "Der Schluß," pp. 464-470). Neither does Matt. 28:8-10 indicate that the version of Mark with which Matthew was familiar went beyond 16:8 (contra R.H. Gundry, *Mark. A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*, Grand Rapids 1993, pp. 1010-1011. 1021; France, *The Gospel of Mark*, p. 684). Matt. 28:9-10 can be explained as rendering and commenting on Mark 16:8. There is no inconsistency between Matt. 28:8 and 28:9-10, and Matthew's reformulation of Mark 16:8 in 28:8 may be understood as an anticipation of Matt. 28:9-10 (F. Neirynck, "Les femmes au tombeau. Étude de la rédaction matthéenne [Matt. XXVIII.1-10]," in: *id.*, *Evangelica* 1 [ed. F. Van Segbroeck], Leuven 1982, pp. 273-296; esp. 282 n. 2, and 289; Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, p. 76). In his commentary on Mark 16:8, viz that the women "said nothing to anyone", D.E. Nineham concludes that "it is not easy to see, after this very definite and solemn statement ..., how a transition could have been effected to any scene of the sort depicted in the other gospels" (*The Gospel of St Mark*, Harmondsworth 1963, p. 447).

should play no role in scholarly discussion. We have to deal with 16:8 as the original and intentional ending of the gospel.⁴

After the statement that Mark's gospel ends with 16:8, the question may be raised as to whether or not this ending is open, abrupt, or disappointing. Many scholarly attempts to explain Mark 16:8 as a suitable ending argue that the story is deliberately open-ended. According to such interpretations, the readers of the gospel have to work out the implications for themselves; after the failure of the disciples (Mark 14) and the women (Mark 16) the appeal to the reader is all the more stronger. It is held that Mark concludes with a lesson that is deliberately ambiguous, subtle and mysterious. However, such interpretations clearly have a modern flavour. They may appeal to the modern reader, but seem hardly fitting to an ancient text such as the gospel according to Mark.⁵

Furthermore, the judgement that the gospel ends abruptly is not compelling either. Mark 16:8 can be understood as consisting of four short sentences that form two related pairs:

They (i.e. the women) went out (i.e. of the tomb) and fled from the tomb. For terror and amazement had seized them. They said nothing to anyone. For they were afraid.

Assuming that ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ is a sentence on its own, the gospel ends with a short sentence to be sure. This ending however must not be qualified as abrupt. The opposite is true. Even without the words ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ everyone would have concluded that the women remained silent out of fear. If anything, the final words ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ are redundant. With such a redundant short sentence the gospel ends in "good" Markan style.⁶

Finally, whether or not the end of 16:8 is regarded as satisfying entirely depends on one's personal taste. Yet, it would be a mistake to think that 16:8 was intended to disappoint the readers. Quite the

⁴ As stated by R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 1, Freiburg ²1977, p. 47: "Die Eigenart dieses Schlusses ist Anstoß zur Interpretation, nicht zu konjekturaler Rekonstruktion oder Vermutung." See further Aland, "Der Schluß," p. 469; E.-M. Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium im Rahmen antiker Historiographie*, Tübingen 2006, p. 239.

⁵ For a discussion of these positions, see France, *The Gospel of Mark*, pp. 670-673; Gundry, *Mark*, pp. 1016-1020.

⁶ Th.E. Boomershine/G.L. Bartholomew, "The Narrative Technique of Mark 16:8," *JBL* 100 (1981), pp. 213-223.

contrary, the gospel of Mark is intended to end in a positive way. In order to appreciate the ending, one should focus not just on 16:8 but on 16:1-8.

1. *The Women in Mark 16:1-8*

I take 16:1-8 as a composition of the author of Mark. Although at some points it reflects earlier Christian tradition (see section 2 below), it is Mark's account, purposefully created as a concluding episode to the story at large.⁷

The three women, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome (16:1) play a crucial role in 16:1-8.⁸ It is of importance to define what their role is and what it is not. The women function as witnesses to the empty tomb, or more precisely as the recipients of the angelic testimony of the empty tomb.⁹ The depiction of the women reflects an authorial intent. The author has prepared them for their role in Mark 15.

In 15:40 the three women are suddenly introduced into the story, as part of a greater group of women that witnessed the crucifixion from a distance. Neither this group, nor the three women singled out, have been mentioned before in the story. Only retrospectively are the three interconnected with the earlier part of the gospel by the description "these used to follow him (i.e. Jesus) and provided for him when he was in Galilee" (15:41). The author brings in a new character and he does so for a particular reason, as we will see. In Mark 15, the women are described as witnessing Jesus dying on the cross

⁷ For this position, see e.g. A.Y. Collins, "The Empty Tomb in the Gospel According to Mark," in: E. Stump/Th. P. Flint (eds), *Hermes and Athena. Biblical Exegesis and Philosophical Theology*, Notre Dame 1993, pp. 107-140; esp. 115-123.

⁸ There is some variation in the way the women are presented in 15:40, 47 and 16:1. Collins, "The Empty Tomb," p. 116, argues that this variation can be explained as a literary device, in this manner that both 15:47 and 16:1 in different ways present a shortened version of the full reference of 15:40.

⁹ The νεανίσκος of 16:5-7 is depicted as an angel. This can be concluded from a range of characteristics, such as the description of his clothes, his position as "sitting on the right side," his role, the reaction of the women, and other examples of heavenly messengers, angelic beings, taking the shape of a "young man." See France, *The Gospel of Mark*, pp. 678-679; Gundry, *Mark*, pp. 990-991; Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2, Freiburg ³1980, p. 532; Collins, "The Empty Tomb," p. 121.

(15:40) and as witnessing his burial (15:47). In other words, they know that Jesus is dead and where he has been buried. This prepares them for the function the author gives them in 16:1-8.¹⁰

On face value, the role of the women is difficult to understand. Why did they wait until the third day before they went to the tomb to anoint the body? Why did they not do so the evening Jesus was buried, like Joseph who bought a linen cloth (15:46)?¹¹ Why did they go to the tomb first and only then realised that they would not be able to remove the entrance stone? Why did they remain silent about the news they had heard, which was good news indeed? To these questions all kinds of rationalising answers have been given. It has been argued that they could not go to the tomb earlier, because only after the Sabbath was over could they have bought spices for anointing. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the women probably hoped to find someone at the tomb or somewhere nearby to help them remove the entrance stone. Finally, it is suggested that the women, although at first remaining silent about what they had heard and seen, perhaps later did speak about it when they had calmed down. These questions and suggested answers are however beside the point. Although the role of the women seems to be incomprehensible, that does not hinder the author. He uses the women in a particular way: as the witnesses to the empty tomb and recipients of the angelic testimony. The role of the women makes sense from the perspective of authorial intent. The author presents them as witnesses to the empty tomb. He presents them, furthermore, as reliable witnesses, for they had also witnessed Jesus' death and burial. They knew where they were going; they were at the right tomb. This is corroborated by the words of the angel, who refers exactly to these elements in verse 6. After the full identification "Jesus of Nazareth" (cf. 1:24; 10:7; 14:67) he refers to the crucifixion by the words "who was crucified" and to the burial

¹⁰ M.D. Hooker, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, London 1991, p. 383, "... Mark's purpose seems to be to establish this small group of women as witnesses of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection."

¹¹ Mark 16:1 is particularly strange after 15:46. Both Matthew and Luke have altered the situation. In Matt. 28:1 the women on Sunday morning went to see the tomb (not to anoint the body). Luke 23:56 narrates that the women had already prepared sweet-smelling spices on the evening of the day of the burial. See Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, pp. 51-52. Commentators agree that historically speaking it was uncommon, to say the least, to anoint a body two days after death; e.g. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2, pp. 29-30.

by the words "Look, there is the place they laid him." All misunderstandings are excluded.

That the women go to the tomb on the first day of the week, is because of the tradition that Jesus was raised from the dead "on the third day," i.e. after two days (1 Cor. 15:4; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34).¹² Since Jesus according to 15:42 had died on the day before Sabbath (i.e. on Friday), he had to be raised on Sunday, the day after Sabbath. So, the witnesses to the empty tomb could not possibly go earlier than Sunday morning. 16:2 emphasises that the women went at the earliest possible moment. The women's dilemma about the removal of the entrance stone in verse 3 anticipates the narrative scene of verse 4. It functions as proof that the removal of the stone was some sort of miraculous event, evidence of the superhuman powers involved. The suggestion of the story is that no one was expected to be there at that time of the day. In itself, the women's question in verse 3 makes no sense at all. In connection with verse 4 however it makes good sense.¹³ The women are a vehicle of the message of the author.¹⁴ If this is true, it may help to explain the women's reaction at the end of the scene. Their flight from the tomb and their remaining silent is part of the author's portrayal of the women. It is therefore appropriate to ask why the author has portrayed them this way.

Some commentators argue that the author portrayed the women as fleeing away and remaining silent, because fear and stupefaction are the appropriate reaction when being confronted with the numinous. Although as a general observation this may be correct, it fails to provide a convincing interpretation of 16:8. First, it is to be noted that precisely this motif of fear as an appropriate reaction to the numinous occurs earlier in the story, in 16:5-6. The women confronted with the *νεανίσκος* sitting in the tomb "were alarmed" (16:5), whereupon the *νεανίσκος* admonishes them, saying: "Do not be

¹² For the translation of this phrase, see M.J. de Jong, "Op de derde dag—op zoek naar een alternatieve vertaling," *Met Andere Woorden* 25 (2006), pp. 14-23.

¹³ See also Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2, p. 531.

¹⁴ The women in Mark 15-16 can be qualified as figures suddenly appearing in the story that remain without any kind of consistent literary character. Cf. S.S. Elliott, "'Witless in Your Own Cause': Divine Plots and Fractured Characters in the Life of Aesop and the Gospel of Mark," *Religion and Theology* 12 (2005), pp. 397-418, esp. 411.

alarmed" (16:6).¹⁵ Fear is the appropriate reaction and 16:5-6 is the appropriate place for this motif. This implies that in 16:8 the notion of fear has a different purpose rather than simply casting the women for a second time in the role of appropriate reactors to the numinous. A look at 16:8 confirms that the fear of the women is not the main message the author wants to convey. The distress, terror and fear of the women function as an explanation for their running away and saying nothing to anyone. So this, their flight and remaining silent, is what we have to explain.

Some scholars trying to make sense of the silence of the women proposed to explain 16:8 from the "messianic secret," in particular as formulated in Mark 9:9.¹⁶ According to Mark 9:9, only after the resurrection is the secret of Jesus' identity fully lifted and then it is to be proclaimed by the *disciples*. For that reason, the women have to be silent about it, in order to give the disciples the opportunity to proclaim it first. This explanation of Mark 16:8 is however highly unlikely. First, the motif of the secrecy of Jesus' identity plays an important role in Mark's portrayal of Jesus' ministry in the first part of the gospel. After the episode of Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52) this motif is more or less abandoned.¹⁷ Second, even if Mark 9:9 can be extrapolated to the end of the story, it would only mean that after Jesus' resurrection, proclaimed in 16:6, the veil of secrecy was to be lifted. The claim that the disciples had to be the first to proclaim Jesus' resurrection is reading something into Mark 9:9 that is not there. Interpreting the silence of the women in 16:8 through the command of Mark 9:9 is creating an unnecessary inconsistency within the story.

A popular way of solving the problems posed by Mark 16:8 is to make this verse harmless by assuming it is not the full story. As argued by many scholars, *initially* the women remained silent, but later they of course did tell the disciples about it. A remarkable expression of this view can be found in C.F.D. Moule's commentary on Mark, where it is argued that 16:8 "... clearly does not mean that they (sc. the women) did not tell their experience to their close friends. It probably means no more than that they were too terrified and in too

¹⁵ See Nineham, *The Gospel of St Mark*, p. 445.

¹⁶ Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, pp. 64, 67.

¹⁷ H.N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in its Historical and Social Context*, Leiden 2004, pp. 172-188, esp. 187.

much of a hurry to stop and speak to anybody they chanced to meet between the tomb and wherever they were staying."¹⁸ Although not everyone taking this position would use such strong terms, it is nevertheless often assumed that 16:8 cannot but imply, in some way or another, that the women eventually *did* speak about it.¹⁹ Otherwise, how could the news of the empty tomb have become known?²⁰

This is however a historicising argument, starting at the wrong end. One must not begin with the literary characters but with the author. He knew it, for he wrote about it.²¹ The real question is not why the women remained silent, but why the author portrayed them like that. In order to answer this question, we must consider what the author wanted to communicate in 16:1-8. The author's main message is a twofold one: (1) he wanted to testify that Jesus was resurrected and (2) that the tomb was empty. The author intended the second element, the emptiness of the tomb, to function as proof for the first, Jesus' resurrection (this will be worked out in section 3 below). In order to communicate his main message, the author brought in a character, a literary recipient for the testimony of Jesus' resurrection and the empty tomb as its proof. This is the function of the women in 16:1-8.

The final episode of the gospel has its climax in verse 6. The testimony of Jesus' resurrection, proven by the emptiness of the tomb, is communicated through the address of the angel to the recipients, the women. The two verses that follow can be regarded as a finishing touch, also fulfilling a clear authorial intent. 16:7, first, refers to the announcement of Jesus' appearance to his disciples. This makes a connection with 14:28, as if to remind the readers that Jesus would

¹⁸ C.F.D. Moule, *The Gospel according to Mark*, Cambridge 1965, p. 133.

¹⁹ This is effectively done by J.L. Magness, *Sense and Absence. Structure and Suspension in the Ending of Mark's Gospel*, Atlanta 1986.

²⁰ A similar suggestion would be, that 16:8 means the women remained silent to *outsiders* whereas they spoke about it only to *insiders* (cf. Aland, "Der Schluß," p. 465). However, the wording in absolute terms, "they said nothing to any one", renders such a differentiation unlikely.

²¹ An analogous case can be found in Mark 14:35-36. There the author clearly emphasises that the only witnesses present at the scene were asleep, and yet verbally narrates Jesus' prayer. The question of how the author could know this cannot be answered on the basis of the gospel. Clearly, the author did not care about this and the readers simply had to accept that the story is told by a narrator who is virtually omniscient.

meet his disciples in Galilee, although the report of their meeting falls outside the scope of the story (see section 2 below). Finally, 16:8 concludes the episode and the gospel as a whole. Its aim is not to create new suspense. Its aim, as will be argued, is to add an explanatory note to 16:6.

Why would an author relate a scene and then explicitly narrate that the witnesses remained silent about it? The most sensible answer to this question is because it was a new story. With the empty tomb scene Mark introduced an unknown element and in 16:8 he provided an explanation for the fact that the story about the empty tomb until then had gone unnoticed.²² The explanation aims to show the readers that the story about the empty tomb was not a fabrication, but that the tomb was empty from the beginning. This however remained unknown due to the silence of the women. The fear of the women is an explanation for their silence. In this way, 16:8 can be understood as a note added to 16:6, where the main message of 16:1-8 is conveyed.

Read this way, the question of what happened to the women afterwards, becomes irrelevant. 16:8 does not start a new story but finishes the tomb scene by providing an explanation for its apparent newness. The question of whether or not the fear of the women was appropriate becomes irrelevant too. The author did not aim to produce a consistent literary character but merely used the women as a vehicle for his message. He did not care that they remained silent; on the contrary, he used their silence for his explanation.

This interpretation of 16:8 has been proposed in the past. The following quotation is from Julius Wellhausen: "16,8 soll erklären, dass dieser Auferstehungsbericht der Frauen erst nachträglich bekannt wurde. Paulus weiss in der Tat noch nichts davon."²³ The motif of the empty tomb is not attested in the letters of Paul, and may not have been part of the earliest tradition of Jesus' resurrection. Whereas the earliest tradition concerning Jesus' resurrection entailed that Jesus had been raised in heaven where he was compensated with a new and heavenly body, Mark's gospel proclaims not only that Jesus was resurrected, but also that the tomb was left empty. This innovation, is

²² See also Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark*, p. 102.

²³ J. Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci*, Berlin 1903 (²1909), p. 146. For an overview of scholars taking this position, see Neirynck, "Marc 16,1-8," pp. 247-249.

the suggestion, demanded for an explanation: how could such a remarkable element as the emptiness of the tomb have gone unnoticed in the earlier tradition of Jesus' resurrection? Mark 16:8 can be understood as a sensible explanation for this: those who witnessed it remained silent about it.²⁴

This interpretation of 16:8 will be worked out in two respects: an analysis of the message of Mark 16:1-8 (section 2), and a survey of the traditio-historical development of the early Christian views on Jesus' death and resurrection (section 3).

2. *The Message of Mark 16:1-8*

a. *The Interrelation of 16:6 and 16:7*

Various scholars have formulated objections against the exegesis of Mark 16:8 defended here. Gundry for instance argued that if this was the case, Mark would have made the "young man" command the women to tell that Jesus had been raised and that he was not in the tomb, in accordance with his testimony of verse 6.²⁵ This objection is however not convincing. The fact that the testimony of verse 6 differs from the command in verse 7, does not say anything about the intention of the passage. More importantly, on closer examination the formulation of Mark in verse 7 *does* correspond perfectly to the purpose of 16:8 as an explanation for the appearance of the empty tomb, as will be argued presently.

First, we take a look at the difference between the angelic testimony of verse 6 and the command in verse 7. The testimony of the "young man" is: "He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him." The command he gives to the women is something different: "But go, tell his disciples and Peter: 'he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.'"

²⁴ An objection has been raised by Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, pp. 52-53. In his view, the explanation defended here is too rationalistic an explanation, since the early church was not concerned with conflicting historical evidence. Fuller's criticism is however not conclusive. It is not a matter of conflicting evidence, but an explanation of the origin of a tradition. Evidently, the early church was highly concerned with the origin of its traditions (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:3 "I delivered to you ... what I also received").

²⁵ Gundry, *Mark*, p. 1013.

In the command of verse 7, ὅτι εἶπατε ... ὅτι is to be understood as a ὅτι-recitative, introducing direct speech.²⁶ This is confirmed in two ways. First, 16:7 is a clear echo of 14:28. In 14:28 Jesus addresses the twelve, saying: "... after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee," προᾶξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν. In 16:7 this is προᾶγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν. It is likely that the ὑμᾶς of 14:28 are identical with the ὑμᾶς of 16:7, i.e. the disciples. Second, the words ὑπάγετε and εἶπατε cast the women in the role of messengers. They are commissioned by the angel to deliver a message to a third party, the disciples. As usual, the content of the message concerns the addressees, not the messengers.

The testimony of the "young man" in 16:6 is the central element of 16:1-8. It is the centrepiece around which everything has been arranged.²⁷ Whereas the women are the narrative recipients of the testimony, the real addressees are the readers of the gospel.²⁸ The author reaches his main goal in 16:6: he has communicated to the readers that Jesus was raised from the dead, a message proven by the fact that the tomb where he had been buried was empty. In order to communicate this, he used the women as a narrative recipient of the testimony. This testimony is however not what the women have to convey to the disciples. The women are the witnesses on the spot, but not the messengers responsible for its annunciation. The actual command the angel gives to the women in verse 7 is basically the same as Jesus' message to his disciples in 14:28. The message the women are to convey is already known to the disciples. Rather than speculating that the disciples perhaps needed a reminder, one might understand this as the author's attempt to formulate an "innocent" command. It was a message that already had been conveyed. The message the women have to convey (verse 7) is different from the testimony they receive (verse 6) and deliberately so. The story does not imply that the

²⁶ C.H. Turner, "Marcan Usage," in: J.K. Elliott (ed.), *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark. An Edition of C.H. Turner's "Notes on Marcan usage" together with other comparable studies*, Leiden 1993, pp. 68-74.

²⁷ R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der Synoptischen Tradition*, Göttingen ⁵1961, p. 311; J. Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus 2*, Neukirchen 1979, p. 340.

²⁸ Cf. the explicit address to the readers ("let the reader understand") in Mark 13:14 and the comments by Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark*, pp. 91-92, on the author-reader perspective of 13:14-20.

meeting between Jesus and his disciples was frustrated because of the silence of the women, as will be argued below. On the contrary, the author formulated a command that could be left untold without dramatic consequences for the implications of his story.

b. The Reliability of the Announcement of 16:7

In the following I will argue that according to the logic of the story, the meeting of Jesus and the disciples as announced in 14:28 and 16:7 did indeed take place although it is not included in the narration.

The story of Mark claims that Jesus' ministry from beginning to end proceeded according to God's plan. God commissioned Jesus before he began his ministry (Mark 1:11), and the developing story emphasises time and again that Jesus was sent by God. The early Christian tradition perceived Jesus' ministry in an eschatological light: everything that happened to him *had* to happen (δεῖ), in order for the kingdom of God to fully break through. The formulation δεῖ refers to the plan of God, the necessary path to Jesus' messianic glory as enunciated in the scriptures.²⁹ This view on Jesus' ministry is pre-Markan, as appears from e.g. 1 Cor. 15:3-4, "in accordance with the scriptures", and 1 Cor. 15:25, "for he, i.e. Jesus, must (δεῖ) reign ...".³⁰ Within the gospel of Mark, this comes to the fore in the announcements of suffering, Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34, and in a range of further passages.³¹ These texts aim to demonstrate that Jesus' death was not an unexpected fiasco, but something that *had* to happen because it was part of God's plan.³² This view, with reference to the scriptures, occurs also in e.g. Mark 14:27 and 14:48-49, which state that everything happening to Jesus, including the nightly arrest and the flight of the disciples, happened according to God's plan. Jesus' ministry was not a failure but the exact outcome of the predic-

²⁹ Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, p. 99.

³⁰ Further stages in this chain of eschatologically necessary events are referred to in 1 Cor. 15:53, "for this perishable body must (δεῖ) put on imperishability" and 2 Cor. 5:10, "For all of us must (δεῖ) appear before the judgement seat of Christ." For a similar use of δεῖ in the context of events that are part of the chain of eschatologically necessary events, see Mark 9:11; 13:7, 10.

³¹ Mark 2:20; 8:33 (τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ); 9:11, 12; 10:45; 14:27-28, 36, 41.

³² The first announcement of suffering explicitly states "that the Son of Man *must* (δεῖ) undergo great suffering, and be rejected ... and be killed, and after three days rise again" (8:31).

tions in the scriptures as planned by God. However, not only Jesus' suffering and death are presented as being part of the divine plan, but also his resurrection. Just as his suffering and death *had* to happen, so also had his resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:34). The claim that everything happened according to God's plan guarantees to the reader that Jesus was raised from the dead. The angelic testimony in 16:6, ἡγέρθη, "he is risen," corresponds with the announcements of 8:31, 9:31 and 10:34, and is entirely trustworthy from the point of view of the story.

Furthermore, the same applies to events that were to happen *after* Jesus' resurrection, such as the events announced in chapter 13 and other passages regarding the coming of the Son of Man (e.g. Mark 8:38; cf. 13:24-27). These events are presented as being part of a similar chain of eschatologically necessary events: they must also take place (δεῖ, 13:7, 10). From the point of view of the story, these announcements are also entirely trustworthy. It is certain that these events will happen as predicted.

If true for the announcements of suffering, death and resurrection and for the "final events," it must be true for the announcement of 14:28 and 16:7 as well. The "meeting in Galilee" announced in 14:28 and 16:7 is not to be connected with the *parousia* but with the tradition of the appearances of the risen Jesus to his disciples (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5).³³ This implies that the meeting in Galilee according to the perspective of Mark's gospel comes *after* the first chain of events, consisting of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, and *before* the second chain of events, i.e. the final events. Both chains of events are of an eschatologically necessary nature. All this implies that the events announced, that would occur between these two chains from the point of view of the gospel necessarily would come true as well. The implication of the gospel is that the meeting in Galilee, announced in 14:28, certainly would happen. In a way, 16:7 functions as a confirmation of this. There, the meeting of Jesus with his disciples in Galilee is referred to again, even with the use of the word reminiscent of the tradition of the appearances (ὁράω). Without including a narration of the appearance of Jesus in Galilee to his

³³ See Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, pp. 63-64; Collins, "The Empty Tomb," p. 122; Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark*, p. 104, with n. 104.

disciples and to Peter, the story implies its happening. From the perspective of the story it *would* happen. From the perspective of the author and his audience it *had* happened.³⁴ Mark thus was in no way opposed to the tradition proclaiming the appearance of the risen Jesus to his disciples. He refers to this tradition in 14:28 and 16:7. However, for the proof of Jesus' resurrection, Mark's focus is on the empty tomb.

Whereas being Mark's formulation, 16:7 contains various elements that reflect the tradition expressed in 1 Cor. 15:5. First, the use of the verb ὁράω and second the reference to "his disciples and Peter."³⁵ The early Christian tradition contained the proclamation of the appearances of the risen Jesus "to Cephas" and "to the twelve" (1 Cor. 15:5). This tradition is referred to in Mark 16:7. Clearly, Mark accepted the tradition of the proclamation of the appearances of the risen Jesus. Yet he also added something to it, by locating the appearances in Galilee. The verb προάγω here means "to precede."³⁶ According to 16:7, Jesus will precede the disciples in the sense that when they reach Galilee, "they will find him waiting to appear to them there from heaven."³⁷ This excludes any prior meeting between Jesus and his disciples in Jerusalem. In the earliest attestation of the tradition, 1 Corinthians 15, no location is mentioned. Mark, by taking up this tradition, fills in the blank by locating the meeting in Galilee. Mark presents Galilee as the place where Jesus will appear to his disciples.³⁸

It is often asserted that for some reason Mark left the appearances story or stories untold. The question must be raised however whether there were any appearances stories available by then. 1 Cor. 15:4-7

³⁴ From a literary point of view it may be added that allusion to certain events well-known to the readers without actually narrating them, is a common literary feature; see Collins, "The Empty Tomb," p. 122, referring to Magness, *Sense and Absence*.

³⁵ Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, pp. 57-58.

³⁶ Cf. the use of this verb in Mark 6:45; Matt. 14:22.

³⁷ Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, p. 61.

³⁸ This, and the implication that according to Mark Galilee is the place from where the Christian message after Jesus' death was spread, have been taken as evidence that Mark and his community were to be located in Galilee; see Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark*, p. 104; H.J. de Jonge, "De markaanse gemeente," in: J. Delobel/H.J. de Jonge/M.J.J. Menken/H.W.M. van de Sandt (eds), *Vroegchristelijke gemeenten tussen werkelijkheid en ideaal. Opstellen van leden van de Studiosorum Novi Testamenti Conventus*, Kampen 2001, pp. 84-99; esp. 85.

shows that in the earliest decades of Christian tradition both Jesus' resurrection and his subsequent appearances were proclaimed to have happened. There is however no evidence that they were as yet the topic of narrations. Similarly to 1 Corinthians 15, Mark 16 contains the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection (ἡγέρθη, 16:6; cf. ἐγήγερται, 1 Cor. 15:4) and the "proclamation" of Jesus' appearance in the form of an announcement (16:7). These are proclamations, not narrations.³⁹

c. Mark 16:1-8 as an Epilogue to the Story as a Whole

Why does Mark's gospel not contain any appearance stories? The first answer is, that at the time Mark wrote his gospel there may not have been a tradition of appearance narratives. Christian tradition included the proclamation of the appearances of the risen Jesus, but perhaps no narrations of the appearances. This answer is however not sufficient. For even without a tradition to hand, Mark could have told such a narration anyway. Why did he not do that? In order to answer this, Mark's story as a whole must be taken into account.

Mark's story relates Jesus' ministry on earth. The way in which the story begins and ends has been termed as with "announcement and interpretation."⁴⁰ Mark begins his story with "announcement and interpretation" in 1:1-11. Before Jesus' identification as God's son and envoy and the actual start of his ministry (1:9-11), Jesus' ministry is announced and interpreted (1:2-3, 4-8). At the end of the story, Jesus' ministry on earth ends in Mark 15 with his death and burial. After that follows Mark 16:1-8 as an epilogue, which, again, contains interpretation and announcement.⁴¹ The interpretation and announcement is given by the νεανίσκος, functioning as an *angelus interpres*, whose role is reminiscent of that of John the Baptist in 1:2-8.⁴² His message echoes what has been said before: Jesus was crucified, he is risen, and he will appear in Galilee. Mark evidently intended to narrate the story of Jesus' ministry on earth. After the

³⁹ Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, p. 68.

⁴⁰ Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, pp. 249-251.

⁴¹ Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, p. 250, points out that Mark 16 does not focus on the women seeing the empty tomb, but rather on the angel explaining it to them.

⁴² Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, pp. 248-250.

initial interpretation and announcement, Jesus enters the scene to officially begin his ministry (1:9-11). When his ministry has been completed (chapter 15), Jesus leaves the scene, thereby clearing the stage for a final interpretation and announcement (16:1-8). Mark "begins as he ends, having raised and lowered the curtain with Jesus off-stage, but present in revelation, proclamation, and responsive action."⁴³ This answers the question of why Mark did not narrate the appearance in Galilee: it fell outside the scope of his story about Jesus' ministry on earth.⁴⁴ The reason that the appearance of the risen Jesus within the story keeps the status of an announcement whose fulfilment is implied but not narrated, lies in Mark's compositional purpose.

Mark did not oppose the earlier traditions concerning Jesus' death, resurrection, and appearance from heaven. He depicted Jesus as a righteous sufferer, who after dying as a martyr received heavenly vindication. He demonstrated that everything that happened to Jesus including his resurrection was part of God's plan as laid out in the scriptures. Furthermore, he expressed Jesus' resurrection in the traditional language (ἀνίστημι, ἐγείρω) and in 14:28 and 16:7 he refers to the tradition of the appearances of the risen Jesus (ὁπάω; cf. 1 Cor. 15:5). All these pre-Markan traditions are present, valid and working in the gospel. Mark however added a further piece of evidence to this: the empty tomb, the disappearance of Jesus' body as proof of his heavenly vindication.

That the empty tomb is a new element, is indicated by the fact that its testimony is received by new characters: the three women. Mark brings them into the story in chapter 15, in order to prepare them for their role as witnesses to the empty tomb and to the angelic testimony. They had played no role before, neither in the gospel of Mark nor in the tradition concerning Jesus' appearances as attested in 1 Corinthians 15. Thus, Mark did not only introduce a new element, the empty tomb, but he also distinguished this new element and the characters attached to it, the women, from the earlier tradition of the appearances of the risen Jesus and the characters connected with that, the disciples and Peter.

⁴³ Magness, *Sense and Absence*, p. 90.

⁴⁴ Cf. Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, p. 251.

With the command of the angel in 16:7, Mark neatly juxtaposes the new proof of Jesus' resurrection to the already existing tradition of Jesus' appearances to his disciples and to Peter. 16:7 functions as a reminder of 14:28 to the reader of the story: it confirms that Jesus and his disciples did meet, as early Christian tradition had it. Only the report of the actual meeting falls outside the scope of Mark's story.

This clear distinction between the tradition of the appearances and the motif of the empty tomb indicates that Mark realised that, compared to the tradition of the appearances, the motif of the empty tomb was an unknown element. This explains the remark of 16:8: although the reader may be unfamiliar with the proof of the empty tomb, he can be sure it is true. It had been empty from the beginning; only the witnesses remained silent about it.

3. The Traditio-Historical Relation between Jesus' Resurrection and the Empty Tomb

a. Paul

The early Christians believed that Jesus was resurrected. In the letters of Paul one finds various repeated creed formulas that in all likelihood reflect pre-Pauline Christian tradition concerning the belief in Jesus' resurrection. Such formulas are "God has raised him from the dead" and "Jesus has died and risen."⁴⁵ For Paul the proclamation that Jesus was raised from the dead was a tradition he received, transmitted, repeated, and used as a basis for other doctrines which Christians in his view should also believe. From Paul's letters it can be inferred how Jesus' resurrection was initially envisaged, namely as a heavenly resurrection occurring soon after his death. God raised him

⁴⁵ This section mainly follows the position set out by Henk Jan de Jonge, in "Ontstaan en ontwikkeling van het geloof in Jezus' opstanding," in: F.O. van Gennep *et al.* (eds), *Waarlijk opgestaan! Een discussie over de opstanding van Jezus Christus*, Baarn 1989, pp. 31-50; esp. pp. 31-43; and H.J. de Jonge, "De opstanding van Jezus. De joodse traditie achter een christelijke belijdenis," in: T. Baarda/H.J. de Jonge/M.J.J. Menken (eds), *Jodendom en vroeg christendom: continuïteit en discontinuïteit*, Kampen 1991, pp. 47-61. This position was elaborated by J. Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia. A Traditio-Historical Study of Paul's Eschatology in 1 Cor. 15:20-23*, Leiden 1996, pp. 135-152.

from the dead to heaven, where he received a new and heavenly body.

The traditio-historical roots of the early Christian view of Jesus' resurrection can be found in the concept of rehabilitation in heaven granted to righteous sufferers on earth. In the Old Testament and Jewish literature from the Greco-Roman period, the view is prominently attested that a righteous person, who suffers on earth because of his faith and obedience to God, will be rescued and rehabilitated by God. It is held that God will take his side, turn his misery into glory, vindicate the humiliated one, and punish his persecutors. In Jewish literature from the Greco-Roman period a particular outcome of the belief in rehabilitation of the righteous sufferer found expression: those who paid with their lives for their obedience to God, martyrs, would be compensated in heaven by receiving a new and superior heavenly body. The notion of the heavenly vindication of martyrs after their death can be understood against the background of two current views: first, the view that the life of certain excellent people on earth was continued with a glorious life in heaven, and second, the traditional view that God rehabilitated and compensated the righteous sufferer.

Jesus' followers saw his suffering and crucifixion as the suffering and death of a righteous man. For them Jesus typically was the righteous person whose faith and obedience to God ended with his violent death. This opened the way for the belief that God had vindicated him in heaven. They interpreted Jesus' fate in terms of the tradition of the heavenly vindication of the martyr. They believed that God had granted Jesus a new, incorruptible, heavenly body, in order to compensate him for the loss of his earthly body.⁴⁶ The early Christians believed that Jesus was raised and lived in heaven. This notion of Jesus' vindication did *not* naturally go hand in hand with the motif of the empty tomb. On the contrary, the earthly body is contrasted with the new heavenly body in the sense that the first is dead, buried and left behind, whereas the second is new, superior, and given as a compensation for the loss of the first (cf. Phil. 1:23 and 2 Cor. 5:1-8).

⁴⁶ Resurrection in this respect was not merely the restoration of the former mode of existence nor a prolongation of the former mode of existence, but the gift of a new form of existence; Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, p. 17.

In Paul's understanding, Jesus' resurrection was a transformation into a completely different kind of existence. For Paul as presumably for many other early Christians, Jesus' resurrection did *not* imply his tomb was empty.⁴⁷ For Paul, the question of what happened to the old body probably was a non-issue; it was crushed, dead, and left on earth.

From an early stage onwards, the belief of Jesus' resurrection in heaven, went hand in hand with the belief that the risen Jesus had appeared (ὤφθη) to some of his followers. An early testimony of this is found in 1 Cor. 15:3-8. Most of this passage goes back to pre-Pauline tradition. This is particularly the case for 15:3b-5a and probably also for parts of 5b-7.⁴⁸ The tradition that the risen Jesus had appeared to one or more of his followers is very early and clearly pre-Pauline. As Henk Jan de Jonge has emphasised, any proclamation of the appearance of the risen Christ necessarily follows the belief of Jesus' resurrection. The belief of Jesus' resurrection in heaven is a *conditio sine qua non* for the belief that the risen Jesus appeared to one or more of his followers. Yet, the tradition of Jesus' appearances soon acquired the function of proving the reality of his resurrection. It functions in this way in the pre-Pauline tradition behind 1 Cor. 15:3b-5a and in Paul's formulation of 1 Cor. 15:3-8.⁴⁹

b. *Mark*

Whereas Paul's view of Jesus' resurrection implied that his dead body remained on earth, in the gospel according to Mark a new perspective on Jesus' resurrection is introduced. On the one hand, Mark 16 continues the notion of Jesus' resurrection as found in

⁴⁷ Collins, "The Empty Tomb," pp. 111-114; esp. 113-114.

⁴⁸ H.J. de Jonge, "Visionary Experience and the Historical Origins of Christianity," in: R. Bieringer/V. Koperski/B. Lataire (eds), *Resurrection in the New Testament. Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, Leuven 2002, pp. 35-53; esp. 35-41. See also Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*, pp. 9-49.

⁴⁹ De Jonge, "Visionary Experience," pp. 46-47. In the tradition preserved in 1 Cor. 15:3b-5a, two kinds of evidence are adduced for the reliability of Jesus' resurrection: first that it was according to scripture, second that Jesus after his resurrection appeared to Cephas. In the additional list of persons believed to have experienced an appearance of Jesus, the phrase "most of whom are still alive," referring to the "more than five hundred brothers" is particularly illustrative of the function of the list of acclaimed appearances as proving the resurrection; see H.W. Hollander, *1 Korintiërs 3. Een praktische bijbelverklaring*, Kampen 2007, p. 88.

Paul's letters (ἡγέρθη 16:6). On the other, Mark added a new element to it, by proclaiming that the earthly body had disappeared from the tomb. I will refer to this as the invention of Mark. That is not to claim that the author of the earliest gospel personally invented this idea, but to emphasise that this is the first attestation of this view and that this view reflects a development within the early Christian portrayal of Jesus' resurrection.

In order to understand Mark's perception of Jesus' resurrection, one has to decide what 16:6 means and what it does not mean. First and foremost, Mark believed that Jesus after his death was resurrected in heaven. This is his basic conviction, which he shared with Paul. This is also the main message of the νεανίσκος. After the identification, "Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified", his testimony begins with ἡγέρθη, "he has been raised." That this is the basic conviction for Mark not only follows from its first position in the testimony of 16:6, but also from the fact that this has been announced earlier at various times in the gospel, e.g. 8:31; 9:31; 10:34. The "young man" continues his messages as follows: "he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him." This additional message functions as a confirmation of the first, "he has been raised." It makes clear (a) that the body had been there and (b) that it no longer was there. This motif of the empty tomb or disappearance of the body is intended as a confirmation of the basic notion of Jesus' resurrection.

How is the resurrection as proclaimed by Mark 16:6 to be understood? In all likelihood not as a revival or revivification of the "old body," as if the corpse came back to life again, stood up, removed the stone and walked out of the tomb.⁵⁰ The resurrection in Mark is to be understood as it is in Paul, as a transformation and vindication in heaven.⁵¹ The earthly body was transformed into a heavenly body. However, in order to prove that this heavenly vindication had happened, something is testified that is highly spectacular:

⁵⁰ The idea that resurrection involved the revivification of the corpse was a development brought about by Christian theologians in the second century CE; J. Tromp, "'Can These Bones Live?' Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Eschatological Resurrection," in: H.J. de Jonge/J. Tromp (eds), *The Book of Ezekiel and its Influence*, Aldershot 2007, pp. 61-78; esp. 66-70. Although Mark did not share this view of resurrection, his motif of the empty tomb paved the way for the later development of the idea of "carnal resurrection" of orthodox Christianity.

⁵¹ Collins, "The Empty Tomb," pp. 130-131.

the dead body was gone. It is not that the dead body was needed for the resurrection; it is rather a matter of confirming one supernatural intervention with another. Resurrection implied a supernatural intervention: God intervened by transforming a person and granting him a new and heavenly body. This intervention and its effect, however, could be believed and acclaimed, but not perceived. In order to confirm this unperceivable divine intervention, Mark brings in a further divine intervention, this time a perceivable one with regard to its effect. The removal of the stone, the presence of the angelic messenger, and the disappearance of the body, all show that something supernatural had happened. These are the visual circumstances that were intended to prove the invisible resurrection of Jesus.

Interpreted this way, the question of what exactly had happened to the dead body is not important. The first issue of importance was that Jesus was transfigured and resurrected in heaven. The second issue of importance was that the body was gone. Together with the removal of the stone and the presence of the angel, this second issue visibly confirmed to those present that something miraculous had happened, and this miracle was, of course, Jesus' resurrection in heaven.

c. Resurrection versus Assumption

As many scholars have pointed out, the motif of the empty tomb or disappearance of the body has a traditio-historical ring quite different from that of the notion of resurrection. The motif is more at home in the concept of assumption. Some scholars even claim that in 16:1-8 Mark has mixed up two different traditio-historical complexes, namely that of assumption and of resurrection. In order to solve this presumed problem, it is sometimes suggested that 16:1-8 was originally a post-mortem disappearance story dealing with Jesus' assumption that was turned by Mark into a resurrection story.⁵²

This view however is unconvincing. First, it is unlikely that behind Mark 16:1-8 there hides a pre-Markan story, be it a resurrection

⁵² E. Bickermann, "Das leere Grab," *ZNW* 23 (1924), pp. 281-292; D.A. Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb: The Post-Mortem Vindication of Jesus in Mark and Q," *NovT* 45 (2003), pp. 123-137; esp. 134, where he argues that in 16:1-8 "Mark is adapting a pre-Markan story with the purpose of conforming it to the kerygmatic appearance tradition."

story or an assumption story.⁵³ Although Mark relies on earlier Christian tradition, 16:1-8 is best regarded as his composition.⁵⁴ The fact that Mark does not narrate any appearances of the risen Jesus cannot be used as an argument against the notion of resurrection being at home in 16:1-8.⁵⁵

Furthermore, the claim that the motif of the absence of a body is enough to invite the notion of assumption is untenable. Usually, the motif of bodily disappearance is accompanied by explicit reference to assumption terminology. In Mark 16:6, however, the motif follows after reference to Jesus' resurrection. The "problem" can be solved by suggesting that Mark borrowed a motif usually at home within a traditio-complex of assumption in order to provide a further proof for Jesus' resurrection. The question is then why he did this.

For Mark, the basic conviction, not only in 16:6 but in his whole gospel, is Jesus' resurrection. He used the disappearance of the body as proof for his main thesis that Jesus had been resurrected. Both the fact that the women are explicitly addressed as "looking for" Jesus, and the words "he is not here," are to some extent reminiscent of what is told about Enoch and Elijah in the Old Testament. However, the main point of comparison is God's intervention. God took Enoch and Elijah to heaven, i.e. he transformed their earthly body into a heavenly body. In their cases, the term assumption is applicable. They did not die, but were taken away. Jesus however died. His transformation is expressed as a resurrection, not as an assumption. True, there are some examples of Greek heroes that died first, were buried and then were translated.⁵⁶ Collins therefore argues that the Christian affirmation that Jesus had been raised from the dead

⁵³ As has been argued cogently by e.g. Collins, "The Empty Tomb," pp. 115-123.

⁵⁴ According to Bickermann, "Das leere Grab," p. 290, cited with approval by Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb," p. 131, the reference to the resurrection in 16:6 (ἡγέρθη) is of an "intrusive nature", added by Mark to the pre-Markan account. However, without ἡγέρθη the message of the angel is seriously reduced. This removes the main element, without which the remaining message could easily be completely misunderstood.

⁵⁵ Contra Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb," p. 129. Smith's further argument that the testimony of the young man and the announcement of the appearance in Galilee are to be regarded as assumption motifs (p. 130) is inconclusive, since both motifs can equally be understood as accompanying the notion of resurrection.

⁵⁶ See Collins, "The Empty Tomb," pp. 125-126; for further examples, see Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb," p. 127, with n. 20.

"seemed quite similar to the claim made in some Jewish circles that Enoch had been taken up to heaven and to the claims made in Greco-Roman circles regarding the translation or apotheosis of heroes, rulers, and emperors."⁵⁷ This is true, but only in a wider and more general sense. Seen more precisely, Jesus' resurrection in Mark, as it is in Paul, is moulded on the type of the martyr vindication.⁵⁸ Notwithstanding a considerable overlap, there remain differences between the Greek-type hero assumption and Hellenistic-Jewish martyr vindication.⁵⁹ Whereas resurrection always follows after death, assumption usually—though not always—means an escape from death. Assumption implies the disappearance of the body, whereas resurrection involves the gift of a new and heavenly body. Both assumption and resurrection normally are the result of divine intervention and reflect divine favour bestowed on the one assumed or resurrected. Resurrection involves a transformation; assumption also involves a transformation unless the person assumed appears to have been divine all the time.⁶⁰ Mark in his description of Jesus' vindication as a resurrection added the motif of the absence of the corpse, a motif usually part of the notion of assumption, but this time serving as a confirmation of Jesus' resurrection.

It would be short-sighted to suggest that Mark brought in the motif of the absence of the corpse by mistake. Instead, the normal function of this motif should be taken into account. Literature from the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman period contains a range of examples of persons believed to have been taken up to heaven, either before or after their death, with the result that they or their remains were no longer found on earth. In many of these cases of apotheosis or as-

⁵⁷ Collins, "The Empty Tomb," p. 130.

⁵⁸ See also P.G. Bolt, "Mark 16:1-8: The Empty Tomb of a Hero?", *Tyndale Bulletin* 47 (1996), pp. 27-37.

⁵⁹ Contra Collins, "The Empty Tomb," pp. 125-126.

⁶⁰ Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb," p. 133, is right to distinguish between resurrection and assumption. The two main distinctions he mentions however in my view are not adequate. First, Smith argues that unlike assumption, resurrection involved an appearance of the resurrected person, rather than the disappearance of the body. However, as De Jonge, "Visionary Experience," pp. 46-47, has shown, the belief in Jesus' resurrection necessarily predates the belief in his appearances. This means that the notion of resurrection could very well function without any acclaimed appearances. Second, Smith's suggestion that only assumption and not resurrection is typically connected with divine favour and status elevation cannot be accepted.

sumption, the absence or disappearance of these persons or their remains was regarded as the evidence of their blissful life in heaven.⁶¹ Mark used the motif of the absence of the corpse in a similar way: as proof of Jesus' blissful state in heaven resulting from his resurrection.

Mark's introduction of the motif of the absent corpse has been interpreted as a typical example of hellenisation of early Christian thought.⁶² In any case, Mark presumably regarded it as strong proof of Jesus' resurrection. The vindication of a martyr in heaven could be acclaimed and believed but not proven. Appearances of such transfigured and vindicated persons could function as a proof. They function in that way in 1 Cor. 15:5-8, and also in Mark 14:28 and 16:7. However, it also appears from 1 Cor. 15:5-8 that claims of appearances were difficult to control. The clearest example of this is found in 1 Cor. 15:8, where Paul adds himself to the list of those having received an appearance. Compared to the "subjective" claims of appearances, the proof of the empty tomb has a much more "objective" flavour. Mark probably regarded it as stronger proof and so did many of the Christians after him. Mark presented this stronger proof in addition to, and not instead of, the tradition of the appearances of the risen Jesus.

With the motif of the empty tomb, Mark did not introduce a new view of Jesus' resurrection, but a new confirmation of it. Whether he was the first to make use of the motif of the missing body in the con-

⁶¹ For example, see De Jonge, "Ontstaan en ontwikkeling," pp. 44-45; Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2, pp. 522-527. Often mentioned is the example of the missing body of Callirhoe. Confronted with an empty tomb, her lover Chaereas concludes that either some god has taken Callirhoe away (ἀποφέρω) and is now keeping her with him (ἔχει μεθ' αὐτοῦ) "against her will but compelled by a mightier fate," or that unbeknownst to him Callirhoe had been a goddess all the time and has now returned to the divine realm (Chariton Aphrodisiensis, *Callirhoe* III 3.4-5; edited and translated by Goold, I.C.I.). Neither of the alternatives Chaereas mentions strictly speaking applies to Jesus. Mark did definitely not regard Jesus' resurrection as a divine kidnap; neither did he intend to suggest that Jesus in secret had been a god all the time. This latter view of Jesus belongs to a later stage in Christian tradition (see D. Zeller, "Hellenistische Vorgaben für den Glauben an die Auferstehung Jesu?," in: R. Hoppe/U. Busse (eds), *Von Jesus zum Christus. Christologische Studien. Festgabe für Paul Hoffmann*, Berlin 1998, pp. 71-91; contra Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb," p. 137). The analogy between *Callirhoe* and Mark's gospel lies on a different level. The motif of the absent corpse in both texts has a similar function: in both cases it is regarded as evidence that superhuman powers were involved.

⁶² De Jonge, "Ontstaan en ontwikkeling," p. 45.

text of Jesus' resurrection is not known, but we may safely suggest that he was the one who introduced the story of 16:1-8. Mark realised that this story contained an element previously unknown, a powerful confirmation of Jesus' resurrection that could not become part of the Christian belief without any explanation as to its origin. Exactly this explanation he provided in 16:8. That this new element could not go without any explanation as to its origin is indirectly confirmed by Matt. 27:62-66; 28:12-15 and Luke 24:11 (cf. also John 20:2). As soon as the explanation of the women's keeping silent was abandoned, the objection needed to be countered that the absence of the body was a lie, a rumour or a trick. The women of Mark 16 however could not be accused of lying or talking nonsense, for they did not speak about it.⁶³ In this way, Mark gives maximal assurance to his readers: it may be new to them, but it is old and reliable news.

Conclusion

The gospel of Mark presents the story of Jesus' ministry, including his death and resurrection. Mark accepted the Christian tradition that proclaimed Jesus' resurrection and his appearance to his disciples. Furthermore, in addition to the tradition that proclaimed Jesus' resurrection and appearance, Mark 16 introduces an element previously unknown: the emptiness of the tomb. In order to convey this message of Jesus' resurrection including the element of the empty tomb, Mark brought a new element into the story, "the three women," whom he prepared for their function in chapter 15 as witnesses to Jesus' crucifixion, death, and burial. They function as the narrative recipients of the testimony of Jesus' resurrection proven by the empty tomb. The emptiness of the tomb functions as the confirmation on earth of his resurrection in heaven.

This new element was not intended to conflict with, or to deny the pre-Markan tradition of resurrection and appearances. This tradition is present, valid and working. The new element, with the women as witnesses, is juxtaposed to the tradition focusing on the "disciples

⁶³ As noted by Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2, p. 535, the silence of the women strengthens the reliability of the message they receive. The women's silence proves that they have not invented the story about the empty tomb.

and Peter.” The gospel at large implies that the meeting in Galilee would happen, and from the time perspective of the readers had happened; Mark’s reason for not narrating it is mainly because it fell outside the scope of his story: the earthly ministry of Jesus.

The proof of Jesus’ resurrection in Mark is the angelic testimony of the empty tomb. By introducing the motif of the empty tomb and the disappearance of the body, Mark borrowed a motif mostly at home within the concept of assumption to heaven. Mark was aware that by proclaiming that the tomb was empty, an unknown element was introduced as proof of Jesus’ resurrection. Therefore, after introducing this proof of Jesus’ resurrection, Mark provided an explanation for the fact that this had remained unknown until then. This explanation is found in 16:8: those who witnessed it remained silent about it. The final words of the gospel give an explanation for this behaviour of the women: They were afraid. Understood this way, the ending of Mark’s gospel cannot be qualified as being either abrupt or open or disappointing. Quite the contrary, Mark 16:1-8 proclaims and seeks to prove Jesus’ vindication. 16:8 is an explanatory note accompanying the main message of the passage as found in 16:6.

Mark 16:8 is sometimes characterised as being ironic. After the women had been faithful (15:40, 47), in the end, when the divine message had to be delivered, they failed.⁶⁴ This is not a convincing characterisation. The women had no free choice; they are a literary vehicle used by the author to present his message, a message which is far from ironic. Mark’s main message is presented in verse 6, and verse 8 is an explanatory note to it. The real irony is that this endnote in the history of interpretation began a life of its own.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Hooker, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, p. 387.

⁶⁵ The author expresses his gratitude to Helen Richardson-Hewitt for correcting the English of this contribution.

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STUDIES ON THE HISTORICAL JESUS
IN THE NETHERLANDS AND FLANDERS
1950-2000

Marinus de Jonge

The Dutch-speaking region, consisting of the Netherlands and Flanders, the northern part of Belgium, is surrounded by much larger geographical areas where German, English and French are the *linguae francae*.¹ The region has no natural boundaries at the East and the South, and the North Sea and the Channel have never been a barrier but have rather constituted a challenge to explore nearby and far-away countries by ship for commercial and other purposes. Speakers of Dutch have always been in open communication with the people around, and there has always been a lively exchange of goods and ideas with the neighbours. And the relatively few persons with Dutch as mother tongue have always had to learn the languages that had a dominant position in Western Europe. In former days first of all French, later often German, and now English (in its British and American varieties)—like the rest of the world. Exposed to influences of the surrounding cultures Dutch and Flemish society and culture have often taken a mediating position and avoided extreme standpoints one way or another.

These characteristics also apply to theology and religious studies in the Netherlands and Belgium. And as to the subject in hand: surveying studies about the historical Jesus in the Netherlands and Flanders one notices how scholars report on what went on in Germany, Great Britain, the United States and Canada (and elsewhere) and give their comments, but one finds little that is typically, let alone exclusively Dutch. One also notices that many books were translated into Dutch from foreign languages (particularly from English) for a wider audience, attracting attention also outside the various

¹ It is a privilege to present this essay at the occasion of the sixty-fifth birthday of Henk Jan de Jonge, once my assistant, later my colleague, since 1991 my successor as professor of New Testament at Leiden University and since 2006 fellow-professor emeritus—and all the time, no less than forty years, a loyal comrade and friend. A few years ago he encouraged me to write this survey and discussed with me some major issues. I want to thank my colleagues T. Baarda and Geert Van Oyen for help and advice.

Christian communities. There has also been a market for works about the documents of Nag Hammadi and other apocryphal Christian writings, and on the manuscripts from Qumran, in view of their possible impact on our knowledge of early Christianity, and of Jesus and his immediate followers. Of course, in Dutch we have also had our share of more novelistic treatments of the life of Jesus. But with regard to the scholarly contributions, on which I shall concentrate below, it should be stressed that they may be characterized as comments on an ongoing international debate rather than as arguments in defence of a specific, novel point of view.²

1. *The So-Called New Quest*

Between 1950 and 1960 a number of pupils of Rudolf Bultmann started what James M. Robinson has called "the New Quest of the Historical Jesus"³ which, in the following years, led to a fierce discussion and a flood of articles and books all over the world. Not so in the Netherlands, chiefly because, I think, the influence of R. Bultmann, a central figure in German exegesis and theology, had never been great there. In the period after World War II Dutch theological discussion was dominated by Karl Barth and his followers, whose kerygmatic theology attracted much more attention than that of Bultmann. Among New Testament scholars there was much more interest in the theological message of the books of the New Testament than in historical questions concerning Jesus and the early Christians.

In 1946, for instance, G. Sevenster published his *De Christologie van het Nieuwe Testament*⁴ in which he emphasized the unity of the message of the New Testament, and maintained that the main characteristics of the picture of Jesus found in the Synoptics are in

² See, for instance, C.J. den Heyer, *Opnieuw: wie is Jezus? Balans van 150 jaar onderzoek naar Jezus*, Zoetermeer 1996, translated into English as *Jesus Matters. 150 Years of Research*, London 1996, and in German and Italian. An updated fifth edition of the Dutch original appeared in 2002. Den Heyer, whose survey is not exhaustive, shows that the Dutch contributions to the research of the life of Jesus are relatively few in number; he mentions also quite a few translations into Dutch of books written in other languages, as well as some more popular publications.

³ See his book with this title, published in London 1959, ²1961.

⁴ Published Amsterdam 1946, ²1948. The book was never translated. See, however, his "Christologie des Urchristentums," *RGG*³ 1 (1957), pp. 1745-1762.

essential agreement with those of the historical Jesus. The form-critical approach, so important for Bultmann, was accepted in so far as it stressed that the gospels were written to convey a message about Jesus and contained testimony in all their constituent parts. At the same time, however, it was denied that this made them unreliable as historical witnesses.⁵

In 1959 Marinus de Jonge reported on the recent developments of the research into the life of Jesus in Germany.⁶ A number of further articles followed, and in 1971 he brought some of them together in a volume entitled *Jezus, Inspirator en Spelbreker*.⁷ The essays are essentially reports and comments, but they express sympathy for the various efforts to get beyond the impasse created by the fixation on the "kerygma" in the work of Bultmann and Barth. I quote:

We do not wish to and we must not retreat to a proclamation that comes vertically from above, to a timeless idea, or to an ecclesiastical authority that guarantees the trustworthiness of historically uncertain data. We cannot stop with a historical skepticism, because a message can have authority for us only if a tangible person stands behind it ... For the sake of faith we need ever anew to seek after the man Jesus.⁸

In his essays up to 1971 De Jonge made several remarks about ways that may be followed in our efforts to go back from the picture(s) of Jesus given in the sources at our disposal to the words and actions of the man Jesus himself, but he did not follow them up systematically until much later. As we shall see presently, he only returned to the

⁵ In 1969, when the New Quest was already well under way, J.N. Sevenster, a brother of G. Sevenster, and one of the few Dutch New Testament exegetes to enter into an extended discussion with Bultmann, published a volume of essays with the title *Bultmanniana. Een vraag naar criteria*, Wageningen 1969. Writing about the approach to the problem of authenticity in the Synoptic tradition about Jesus, by Bultmann as well as by E. Käsemann and G. Bornkamm, protagonists of the New Quest, he admits that it is difficult to reach objective results, but defends the position that the evangelists, just because of their faith in Jesus, took care to give a reliable record of those events in which he played a central part.

⁶ "Nieuwe bijdragen tot de Leben-Jesu-Forschung in Duitsland," *Vox Theologica* 29 (1959), pp. 129-144. It was preceded by an article "Enige recente studies over het leven van Jezus," *Theologie en Praktijk* 15 (1955), pp. 97-111, on English "Lives of Jesus," especially T.W. Manson, *The Servant-Messiah*, Cambridge 1953. See also, without explicit reference to the New Quest, A.F.J. Klijn, *Wat weten wij van Jezus van Nazareth?*, The Hague 1962.

⁷ Nijkerk 1971; trans. and ed. by John E. Steely as *Jesus: Inspiring and Disturbing Presence*, Nashville/New York 1974. Not included in this volume were "Bultmann en Ebeling," *Theologie en Praktijk* 24 (1964), pp. 70-86, and "Theologie als hermeneutiek," in: G.C. Berkouwer/A.S. van der Woude (eds), *Revolte in de theologie*, Nijkerk 1968, pp. 74-89.

⁸ *Jesus: Inspiring and Disturbing Presence*, pp. 51-52.

subject in 1988 and 1989, when he concluded his book *Christology in Context. The Earliest Christian Response to Jesus* with a chapter "The One with whom it all began,"⁹ and gave the Shaffer lectures at Yale Divinity School (February 1989) published under the title *Jesus, the Servant-Messiah*.¹⁰

Whereas Dutch-speaking New Testament scholars paid relatively little attention to the New Quest, there was a remarkable response on the part of a number of systematic theologians in the 1970s. The section on christology in H. Berkhof's *Christelijk geloof. Een inleiding in de geloofsleer* begins with a chapter on the search for the historical Jesus,¹¹ and, likewise, E. Schillebeeckx's *Jezus, het verhaal van een levende* begins with two chapters on the historical approach to Jesus of Nazareth.¹² In an interesting review of christological publications in Dutch during the past thirty years¹³ Robrecht Michiels has paid much attention to the publications of these two leading theologians (one Protestant, the other Roman Catholic) and a number of others.¹⁴ Characteristic for them is a historical approach of Jesus Christ in search for God's revelation in and through him. Avoiding an untheological "jesuology" as well as an unhistorical metaphysical christology these theologians concentrate on the encounter between God and humankind in the words and actions of the man Jesus, who may be called Son of God and Word of God. There is a clear link here with the post-Bultmannian approach that stresses the continuity (notwithstanding all discontinuity) between the Jesus of history, the disciples of Jesus before and after Easter, and the evangelists, and

⁹ Philadelphia 1988. The final chapter 13 is found on pp. 203-211.

¹⁰ New Haven/London, 1991. Dutch translation: *Jezus als Messias. Hoe Hij zijn zending zag*, Boxtel/Brugge 1990.

¹¹ First edition Nijkerk 1974; ⁵1985. The chapter "Op zoek naar de historische Jezus" is § 31 (§ 32 in the fifth edition). Berkhof's book was translated into English by S. Woudstra as *Christian Faith. An Introduction to the Study of Faith*, Grand Rapids 1979, ²1986.

¹² Bloemendaal 1974. See chapters 1 and 2, pp. 35-82. English translation by H. Hoskins, *Jesus. An Experiment in Christology*, London 1979. It was followed by *Gerechtigheid en liefde, genade en bevrijding*, Bloemendaal 1977.

¹³ "Wat is christologie? Ontwikkelingslijnen in de Nederlandstalige christologie van de laatste dertig jaar," in: J. Haers/T. Merrigan (eds), *Christus in veelvoud. Pluraliteit en de vraag naar eenheid in de hedendaagse christologie*, Leuven/Amersfoort 1999, pp. 173-219.

¹⁴ Especially P. Schoonenberg, *Hij is een God van mensen*, 's-Hertogenbosch 1969, and *De Geest, het Woord en de Zoon*, Kampen 1991; and E. Flesseman-van Leer, *Geloven vandaag*, Nijkerk 1972, and *Wie ioch is Jezus van Nazareth? De christologie in discussie*, The Hague 1985.

that maintains that this continuity is of great significance for the Christian faith.

M. de Jonge's *Christology in Context*¹⁵ and, particularly, his *Jesus, The Servant-Messiah*, marked the beginning of a decade of discussion and further study. His *Jezus als Messias* was the subject of a symposium at his retirement from the chair of New Testament in the University of Leiden. The lectures at that occasion and further contributions to the discussion were published in *Jezus' visie op zichzelf. In discussie met De Jonge's christologie*.¹⁶ In the following year he replied to the ten authors in this volume in an article "Continuïteit in de vroegchristelijke christologie."¹⁷ In the same period he wrote a number of further essays, eventually brought together in *God's Final Envoy. Early Christology and Jesus' View of his Mission*,¹⁸ intended as a revised and updated version of *Jesus, The Servant-Messiah* that had gone out of print. In this last book, as earlier in the Shaffer lectures, De Jonge pays much attention to Nils A. Dahl's approach in his "The Problem of the Historical Jesus," which he considers exemplary.¹⁹ All available evidence has come down to us as recollections about Jesus by Christian communities for whom the risen Lord was the central element in their faith. Form criticism has not yielded objective criteria for separating pre-Easter traditions from later ones, but by applying the "cross-section"-method (later called "the method of multiple attestation") we may find certain characteristic features of Jesus in different, independent strands of the tradition. We must also draw longitudinal lines leading from Judaism through the figure of Jesus to primitive Christianity. Jesus must be studied in the context

¹⁵ It was translated into Dutch (*Christologie in Context. Jezus in de ogen van zijn eerste volgelingen*, Maarssen 1992) and into German (*Christologie im Kontext. Die Jesusrezeption des Urchristentums*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1995). In both translations there is an additional chapter "Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the Faith of the First Christians."

¹⁶ Edited by J.P. Heering *et al.*, Nijkerk 1991. English translations of the lectures at the symposium by W.A. Meeks, D. Lührmann and H.J. de Jonge were published in M.C. de Boer (ed.), *From Jesus to John. Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus de Jonge*, Sheffield 1993, pp. 21-64.

¹⁷ Published in *Christologische Perspectieven. Exegetische en hermeneutische studies* (FS H. Baarlink), Kampen 1992, pp. 241-256.

¹⁸ Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1998. For a wider audience M. de Jonge wrote "Jezus" in H.L. Beck *et al.*, *Grondleggers van het geloof*, Amsterdam 1997, pp. 101-156, and *Het verhaal van Jezus volgens de bronnen*, Maarssen 1997.

¹⁹ Most easily available (with a number of other essays) in: D.H. Juel (ed.), *Jesus the Christ. The Historical Origins of Christological Doctrine*, Minneapolis 1991.

of the Palestinian Christianity of his day, and at the same time we must work backward from the various formulations of early Christianity toward the person who is at their centre.

All this leads, according to De Jonge, to the following picture of Jesus: Already in its earliest stages the Christian message about Jesus presupposes that in Jesus God had brought a decisive and definitive turn in the history of Israel and of the entire world. This conviction must have been present before "Easter." Already during Jesus' lifetime his disciples must have believed that as a prophet, teacher and exorcist he was the herald and inaugurator of God's reign on earth—probably because their master was convinced he was sent by God to perform that task. The many sayings of Jesus about the Kingdom of God show that here, indeed, lies the core of Jesus' teaching. The emphasis is on the complete breakthrough of the kingdom in the near future, bringing with it a definitive change in the world's affairs. It is all the more eagerly awaited because of the manifestation of God's rule in Jesus' words and actions. A survey of contemporary Jewish ideas about the Kingdom of God reveals that the element of the dynamic presence of God's rule is found nowhere else.

The next question is how Jesus' message about the kingdom of God was related to his views on his suffering, death and his vindication by God. For early Christianity it was essential to believe that God had vindicated Jesus and his message—the implications of the resurrection are spelled out in various ways in all our sources. The same is true of the many interpretations of the meaning of Jesus' death. Even if one concentrates on the earliest stages of the message concerning Jesus' resurrection and death (found in traditional elements in the letters of Paul, in Q and in Mark) it is difficult to make out what Jesus believed himself. He may have interpreted his fate as that of God's final envoy to Israel, and he may have seen himself as an obedient servant of God who would be vindicated. It is difficult to say with certainty whether he regarded his death as that of a martyr dying for others.

The expectation of Jesus' parousia, his return from heaven as judge and king, is of central importance in early Christianity. In the gospels the title "Son of man" is often connected with this concept. In all likelihood, Jesus himself did not expect to return as Son of man after a period of time, however short. Inspired by Daniel 7 he expected his vindication as messenger of the kingdom to take place,

during his suffering in life or at his death, in the form of his appearance as the Son of man at the moment that God intervened to establish his sovereign rule on earth once and for all. After his death his followers realized that Jesus' personal vindication, now viewed as resurrection, and the complete breakthrough of the kingdom of God, accompanied by Jesus' return from heaven, were two separate events; one now in the past, the other awaited in the future.

Jesus' own "christology" was implicit rather than explicit. He believed to have been sent as God's final envoy, as the inaugurator of God's rule on earth that would later be realized completely in the entire creation. All centered around the sovereignty of God, and around his fatherhood; Jesus' christology was "theocentric" from beginning to end. As God's final envoy Jesus saw himself as standing in a unique relationship to God, whom he addressed as Father. It is probable that he regarded himself as Messiah and Son of David, inspired and empowered by the Spirit. The use of these, or any other, titles, however, does not in any way impinge on the theocentricity of Jesus' christology.

M. de Jonge's work benefited greatly from the discussion with a number of "sparring partners," particularly those at Leiden. Among them was his successor in the New Testament chair, H.J. de Jonge.²⁰ Of his contributions to the common quest three deserve to be mentioned. First: in his lecture at the symposium of 1991 he agreed with his predecessor's overall approach, but he disagreed with some of his conclusions. Though the designation *christos* must indeed have been connected with Jesus before his death, it cannot be shown that Jesus himself used this designation and regarded himself as the prophetic Son of David. Next, Jesus did speak about the Son of Man, but it is improbable that in using this term he referred to himself. Second,

²⁰ See his "De visie van de historische Jezus op zichzelf" in: Heering *et al.* (eds), *Jezus' visie op Zichzelf*, pp. 48-64, trans. "The Historical Jesus' View of Himself and of his Mission," in: de Boer (ed.), *From Jesus to John*, pp. 21-37. There was a further discussion in H.J. de Jonge, "De oorsprong van de verwachting van Jezus' wederkomst," and M. de Jonge, "Jezus en de toekomst" in: H.J. de Jonge/B.W.J. de Ruyter (eds), *Totdat hij komt. Een discussie over de wederkomst van Jezus Christus*, Baarn 1995, pp. 9-36, 37-46. The former of these essays was also published in French: "Les origines historiques de l'attente du retour de Jésus," *Études théologiques et religieuses* 74 (1999), pp. 491-503. See, finally, H.J. de Jonge, "The Sayings of Confessing and Denying Jesus in Q 12:8-9 and Mark 8:38," in: W.L. Petersen *et al.* (eds), *Sayings of Jesus. Canonical and Non-Canonical. Essays in Honour of Tjitze Baarda*, Leiden 1997, pp. 105-121 and M. de Jonge, *God's Final Envoy*, pp. 59-94 and 95-106.

attention should be paid to H.J. de Jonge's view of the resurrection of Jesus.²¹ Analyzing the notion "appearance," particularly in 1 Cor. 15:4, he shows that the confession that the *risen Christ* appeared to Cephas presupposes the confident belief among the disciples that God had raised into heaven Jesus, the suffering servant who had given his life in obedience to him. This confidence was inherent in their conviction that the master whom they followed was a unique servant and messenger of God. Christian preaching did not emerge shortly after Jesus' death as a result of visionary experiences, but was the continuation of the positive response which the historical Jesus had inspired among his followers before his death. They felt called to continue Jesus' preaching about God's definitive intervention in history and the final breakthrough of his rule.

Third: around Easter 1997 H.J. de Jonge repeated the essential points of his theory in an article for a wider audience.²² In this he argued that also in modern times the central point in the Easter message should be Jesus' proclamation about the arrival and final victory of God's rule on earth, and his call for an obedient response on the part of humankind. Reacting to an in the Reformed tradition ever topical discussion about the atonement as centre of the Christian message, he argues for a radical change in emphasis. All early Christian statements about the significance of Jesus' death are linked to those about his resurrection and, therefore, inspired by the conviction that God had rehabilitated Jesus and vindicated his message about God's rule. In 1997 and the following years a fierce debate following C.J. den Heyer's *Verzoening. Bijbelse notities bij een omstreden thema* occupied the hearts and minds of many.²³ In the course of this also a symposium was held at Leiden about H.J. de Jonge's views.²⁴

²¹ See his inaugural lecture *Visionaire ervaring en de historische oorsprong van het christendom*, Leiden 1992; a revised English version "Visionary Experience and the Historical Origins of Christianity" can be found in R. Bieringer *et al.* (eds), *Resurrection in the New Testament. Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, Leuven 2002, pp. 35-53.

²² *HN Magazine* 53, no. 17 (26.04.1997), pp. 16-18.

²³ Kampen 1997 (many reprints; trans. *Jesus and the Doctrine of Atonement*, London 1998). Among exegetes there was a reaction by H. Baarlink, *Het evangelie van de verzoening*, Kampen 1998. In 1991 Baarlink had argued for the authenticity of Mark 10:45 in: Heering *et al.* (eds), *Jezus' visie op Zichzelf*, pp. 85-99.

²⁴ K.A. Deurloo *et al.*, *Verzoening of koninkrijk. Over de prioriteit in de verkondiging*, Baarn 1998; here also a new article from his hand, "De plaats van de verzoening in de vroegchristelijke theologie," pp. 63-90. A little later two systematic theologians published a book on christology: H.M. Kuitert, *Jezus: nalatenschap van het christendom. Schets voor een*

Odd man out on the Dutch scene is Rochus Zuurmond who in a lecture on the *dies natalis* of the University of Amsterdam on January 8, 1993 revealed himself as a die-hard Bultmannian.²⁵ He rejected the unclear notion "continuity" used by Bultmann's pupils (and the two De Jonges at Leiden); the net result of the New Quest is, according to him, no more than a few vague contours of a man called Jesus; historical inquiry will never yield results that matter, biblical theology will lead us to the kerygmatic Jesus, the Jesus as he is proclaimed in the Scriptures. This proclaimed Jesus is far richer, more powerful and more genuine than the picture of Jesus that historical research is able to reconstruct.²⁶

2. The "Third Quest"

It has become customary to group the many books on the historical Jesus that appeared since the 1980s under the heading "the Third Quest." They form a variegated collection and it would have been possible to include the studies mentioned above in this category. Yet I preferred to treat them in the context of the New Quest because, as Geert Van Oyen has shown, most of the publications belonging to the Third Quest concentrate on historical questions, and are not interested in the relationship between the kerygmatic Christ and the historical Jesus. In many ways the Third Quest is nearer to the First Quest than to the New Quest.

christologie, Baarn 1998, and A. van de Beek, *Jezus Kurios. Christologie als hart van de theologie*, Kampen 1998. Unfortunately neither of them took the exegetical discussion about the historical Jesus seriously. For a report on yet another symposium, see H.M. Kuitert/A. van de Beek *et al.*, *Jezus: bij hoog en bij laag. De christologie van Van de Beek en Kuitert*, Kampen 1999. A more positive approach, in the line of that of the theologians in the 1970s, is found in G.D.J. Dingemans, *De stem van de Roepende. Pneumatheologie*, Kampen 2000, who begins the christological section of his book with a chapter on the inspiring recollection of Jesus ("De inspirerende herinnering aan Jezus. De bijbelse bronnen van het geloof," pp. 426-467). For a discussion of Dingemans' work see the reactions collected in F. de Lange (ed.), *Een aanlokkelijk geloof? De pneumatheologie van Dingemans doordacht*, Kampen 2002.

²⁵ *Op zoek naar de historische Jezus*, Amsterdam 1993; later followed by *Verleden tijd? Een speurtocht naar de 'historische Jezus'*, Baarn 1994. The author does not really enter into a discussion with his opponents.

²⁶ On Zuurmond see also Den Heyer, *Opnieuw: wie is Jezus?*, p. 194, and chapter 13 (pp. 218-232). He is of the opinion that Bultmann and Zuurmond mention an aspect that should not be neglected, but that nevertheless exegetes will always have to follow the way back from Jesus as Scripture portrays him to the historical Jesus.

In 1997 and 1998 Van Oyen gave a balanced assessment of recent trends in three essays devoted to recent studies, in particular those by E.P. Sanders, J.P. Meier, J.D. Crossan and M.J. Borg.²⁷ I mention a few points that are, to a great extent, also representative of the attitude found in other publications in the Dutch language. He notes that it is impossible to write a biography but that certain basic facts about Jesus' life and death are generally accepted. He approves the tendency to portray Jesus in the context of his time—in particular the Jewish milieu of Palestine against the background of Hellenism and the Roman empire.

Van Oyen devotes much attention to the criteria of authenticity that are applied. First, that of multiple attestation; this leads him to a review of its application by J.D. Crossan and the "Jesus Seminar"; their treatment of the sources of the gospels and early dating of non-canonical source-material leads to a distorted picture of Jesus. Moreover, application of any criterion will lead us to Jesus' *ipsissima vox* rather than his *ipsissima verba*. The next criterion is that of dissimilarity, concentrating on utterances of Jesus without parallel in contemporary Jewish sources and in later Christian writings. Van Oyen prefers to follow the "criterion of plausibility," as defined by G. Theissen, that singles out what is historically plausible in a Jewish context and helps to understand the origin of the early Christian movement.²⁸

The centrality of Jesus' pronouncements on the Kingdom of God is generally accepted, but there are differences in interpretation; Van Oyen opts for a picture of Jesus as an eschatological prophet. And, finally, many of the participants in the Third Quest simply want to prove too much; as in the period reviewed by Albert Schweitzer also modern books on the historical Jesus betray the theological and

²⁷ "Over de moeilijke maar noodzakelijke zoektocht naar de historische Jezus," *Collationes* 27 (1997), pp. 115-141; "'Jezus redt... alle mensen opgelet.' Over de band tussen christologie en onderzoek naar Jezus," *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 37 (1997), pp. 331-342; and "Hoe weten we wat? Over de criteria in het historisch Jezusonderzoek," in: F. Van Segbroeck (ed.), *De woorden die Jezus gegeven heeft*, Leuven/Amersfoort 1998, pp. 31-58 (trans. "How do we Know (What There is to Know)? Criteria in Historical Jesus Research," *Louvain Studies* 26 [2001], pp. 245-267). See also his "Jezus: feiten en interpretatie. Het onderzoek naar het onderzoek," in *Christus in veelvoud* (see n. 13), pp. 9-22. Finally seven articles were brought together in Geert Van Oyen, *Jezus. Toen en nu en dan*, Leuven/Amersfoort 2004, ²2005.

²⁸ See G. Theissen/D. Winter, *Die Kriterienfrage in der Jesusforschung. Vom Differenzkriterium zum Plausibilitätskriterium*, Freiburg/Göttingen 1997; G. Theissen/A. Merz, *Der historische Jesus. Ein Lehrbuch*, Göttingen 1996.

philosophical viewpoints of their authors; implicitly the criterion of coherence predominates. Moreover, it should be stressed that concentration on a historical reconstruction of the actions and views of Jesus of Nazareth cannot avoid the question why the variegated preaching and teaching about the living Christ found in the early Christian writings continually looks back to the life and death of this particular person.

Van Oyen's aversion to extreme standpoints is also found elsewhere, for instance in a survey article by M.J.J. Menken²⁹ with a similar assessment of the criteria, a picture of Jesus as representative of God's Kingdom, and emphasis on the link between the implicit christology before and the explicit christology after Easter. Next we may point to C.J. den Heyer's *Opnieuw: wie is Jezus?* already mentioned, that does not only give a general survey of research, but also indicates the author's own point of view. See particularly chapter 13, where he gives a four-page "mini-biography" of Jesus with the title "Jesjoea uit Nazaret." Emphasizing again and again the Jewishness of Jesus³⁰ he prefers to use his Jewish name. In chapter 14 (added in the fifth Dutch edition of 2002) he mentions his book *De messiaanse weg. Van Jesjoea van Nazaret tot de Christus van de Kerken* of 1998, a revised edition of a trilogy published in the period 1983-1991. He points out that, over the years, he has become more cautious in connecting material with Jesus. The second volume of the trilogy devoted to the historical Jesus became one chapter in the new edition. Though increasingly interested in the "multicoloured" proclamation about Jesus in early Christianity, he remains convinced that this multitude of views on Jesus can only be assessed properly if one follows the way back to Jesus, "the man with many faces."

Another scholar to be mentioned here is W. Weren, who concludes his *Vensters op Jezus. Methoden in de uitleg van de evangeliën*, mainly devoted to literary questions, with a chapter on Jesus as historical figure.³¹ His approach resembles that of Van Oyen. In his

²⁹ "Onderzoek naar de historische Jezus. Een beknopt overzicht," *Praktische Theologie* 28 (2001), pp. 415-428.

³⁰ See chapters 8 and 13, where he also mentions a number of further books in Dutch on this topic, plus some translations of books in other languages.

³¹ Zoetermeer 1998; see chapter 12 "Jezus als personage en als historische figuur" (pp. 193-208). Trans. *Windows on Jesus. Methods in Gospel Exegesis*, London 1999. See also Weren's essay "Is Jezus verdwenen achter het geloof van zijn volgelingen? Nieuwe gegevens uit historisch onderzoek," *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 41 (2001), pp. 128-144.

discussion of the sources, however, he does not exclude that the oldest layers in non-canonical Christian sources reflect data from the time of the historical Jesus, and beside the Synoptics he also uses the Fourth Gospel. He maintains that the gospels, however concerned with the kerygma concerning Jesus Christ, also show generic features of Greco-Roman biography.³² As to the criteria he insists, with G.N. Stanton,³³ that there must be a connection between Jesus' intentions and the aftermath following his death, and he speaks of the "criterion of where there is smoke there is fire." Weren stresses the continuity between the wide range of early Christian views about Christ and the man Jesus: Jesus has not disappeared behind the beliefs of his followers. His reconstruction of the life of Jesus is rather more detailed than that in other publications discussed in this section.³⁴

Jakob van Bruggen occupies a special position in the Dutch discussion. In his *Christus op aarde. Zijn levensbeschrijving door leerlingen en tijdgenoten* he is highly critical of all aspects of modern literary and historical scholarship of the New Testament.³⁵ He accepts the historical reliability of the four gospels—which are our primary sources. They report on the work on earth of the incarnate Son of God, and go back to the witness of Jesus' disciples whose eyes, hearts and minds were guided by God himself. We must beware of extreme harmonization and will not always be able to reconstruct a complete picture, but together the gospels present a reliable biography of Jesus Christ.

J.D. Crossan and the "Jesus Seminar" have made the use of non-canonical gospel material, particularly of the Gospel of Thomas, an important topic of discussion. To conclude this essay I report briefly on some contributions to that discussion in the Netherlands and Belgium. As to Crossan: in a detailed article F. Neirynck has given a

³² Following D.E. Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment*, Philadelphia 1987, pp. 17-76.

³³ G.N. Stanton, *Gospel Truth? New Light on Jesus and the Gospels*, London 1995, pp. 145-163. The book was translated into Dutch as *Dichterbij Jezus? Nieuw licht op de evangeliën*, Baarn 1997.

³⁴ See particularly "Is Jezus verdwenen achter het geloof van zijn volgelingen?", pp. 136-143, where he refers to E.P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, London 1993; Dutch trans. *Jezus, mythe en werkelijkheid*, Baarn 1996); and M. de Jonge, "Jezus."

³⁵ Kampen 1987; trans. *Christ on Earth. The Gospel Narratives as History*, Grand Rapids 1998. It was later followed by *Het evangelie van Gods zoon. Persoon en leer van Jezus volgens de vier evangeliën*, Kampen 1996; translated as *Jesus the Son of God. The Gospel Narratives as Message*, Grand Rapids 1999.

critical assessment of his use of non-canonical texts in *The Historical Jesus. The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant*.³⁶ And as to the Gospel of Thomas: this has occupied Dutch scholars for a long time. G. Quispel, one of the editors of the *editio princeps*,³⁷ has continued to publish on this collection of sayings.³⁸ So has T. Baarda, who had a great share in the first book presenting a Dutch translation and commentary, published in 1960,³⁹ and has remained active ever since.⁴⁰ For Quispel a considerable number of the sayings in this gospel (that is to be dated around 140 and was probably composed in encratitic circles in Edessa in Syria) come from a Jewish-Christian source, also known to Tatian. They were transmitted independently from those in the canonical gospels and, because of their Jewish-Christian origin, are a very important source for our knowledge of Jesus. Baarda remains very cautious; he favours a date nearer to 200 and insists on a separate analysis of all individual sayings. Although it may be argued that at least some contain very early traditional material, study of the Gospel of Thomas tells us more about interesting ideas in certain early Christian circles than about Jesus. We may add that in the 1970s the Belgian scholar B. Dehandschutter wrote a number of articles in which he stressed the Gnostic character of the Gospel of Thomas and gave examples of its dependence on the Synoptics.⁴¹

Two further scholars may be mentioned: In the introduction to his recent translation of the Gospel of Thomas A.F.J. Klijn leaves many questions open.⁴² He proves to be very skeptical, however, about the

³⁶ San Francisco/Edinburgh 1991. See F. Neirynck, "The Historical Jesus. Reflections on an Inventory," *ETL* 70 (1994), pp. 221-234. Compare "The Apocryphal Gospels and the Gospel of Mark," in: J.-M. Sevrin (ed.), *The New Testament in Early Christianity*, Leuven 1989, pp. 123-175, updated in *Evangelica* 2. 1982-1991. *Collected Essays* (ed. F. Van Segbroeck), Leuven 1991, pp. 717-783.

³⁷ A. Guillaumont et al. (eds), *The Gospel according to Thomas*, Leiden/London 1959.

³⁸ See, for instance, his *Het Evangelie van Thomas in de Nederlanden*, Amsterdam/Brussel 1971; rev. ed., Baarn 1991.

³⁹ R. Schippers, assisted by T. Baarda, *Het evangelie van Thomas. Apocriefe woorden van Jezus*, Kampen 1960.

⁴⁰ See, for instance, *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus. Thomas, Tatian and the Text of the New Testament* (ed. J. Helderman/S.J. Noorda, Amsterdam 1983; *Essays on the Diatessaron*, Kampen 1994; "Het Evangelie van Thomas: vier korte studies," in: T. Baarda et al., *Het Evangelie van Thomas*, Zoetermeer 1999, pp. 9-45; and "The Gospel of Thomas," *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 26 (2003), pp. 46-65.

⁴¹ For a list of his publications see F. Neirynck in *Collected Essays* 2 (n. 36), p. 723 n. 49.

⁴² *Jezus in de apocriefe evangeliën. Buitenbijbelse beelden van Jezus*, Kampen 1999; for the gospel of Thomas, see pp. 62-81, 162-164.

possibility to give any reliable picture of Jesus, on the basis of non-canonical or of canonical sources, all confronting us with their particular views about Jesus. G.P. Luttikhuizen is more positive about the contribution of the gospel of Thomas to our knowledge of Jesus.⁴³ He compares it with Q and argues that the oldest layers of these two sources are related. He is of the opinion that in the earliest oral tradition Jesus was not yet characterized as either an apocalyptical prophet or a gnostic teacher. The Gospel of Thomas may serve as a correction to the apocalyptic conception of the Kingdom of God that is dominant in the canonical tradition, and bring us nearer to Jesus' own preaching.

Here our review ends. In the period of the New as well as that of the Third Quest Dutch and Flemish scholars have been actively engaged in assessing the various aspects of the international discussion. Most of their contributions may be characterized as sober and balanced—not very spectacular, perhaps, but useful in view of defining the main issues involved.

⁴³ *De veelvormigheid van het vroegste christendom*, Delft 2002; especially "Een nieuwe bron met woorden van Jezus?", pp. 33-57.

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THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON AND DEEDS OF GIFT

John S. Kloppenborg

Narrative realism has been recognized as a characteristic of the parables of Jesus since the time of Adolf Jülicher and C.H. Dodd. Jülicher saw realistic narration as a fundamental characteristic of both the similitude and the parable:

The similitude [*Gleichnis*] guards against any opposition by speaking of what is indubitably true; the parable [*Fabel*] overcomes resistance by telling the story so attractively, so warmly and freshly, that the hearer will not be able to think of any objection. It makes the matter seem so probable that the auditor does not ask whether it is true.¹

Jülicher's definition found a sympathetic hearing in C.H. Dodd's influential *The Parables of the Kingdom* (1936; 1961). Jesus' parables were in fact so realistic that they provided

a singularly complete and convincing picture ... of life in a small provincial town—probably a more complete picture of *petit-bourgeois* and peasant life than we possess for any other province of the Roman empire except Egypt, where papyri come to our aid.²

Since Jülicher and Dodd, realistic approaches to the parables have been embraced by a number of critics,³ most recently by William Herzog, Charles Hedrick and Luise Schottroff.⁴ This does not mean,

¹ A. Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* 1, Tübingen, ²1888-1899, p. 97.

² C.H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, London ²1961, p. 10.

³ J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed., London/New York 1972, pp. 11-12; E. Linne-mann, *Parables of Jesus. Introduction and Exposition*, London 1975, pp. 3-4; A.N. Wilder, *Early Christian Rhetoric. The Language of the Gospel*, Cambridge MA ²1971, p. 81; D.O. Via, *The Parables. Their Literary and Existential Dimension*, Philadelphia 1967, pp. 98-99; N. Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom. Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation*, Philadelphia 1976, p. 104; R.H. Stein, *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*, Philadelphia 1981, pp. 36-41.

⁴ W.R. Herzog, *Parables as Subversive Speech. Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*, Louisville 1994; C.W. Hedrick, *The Parables as Poetic Fictions. The Creative Voice of Jesus*, Peabody 1994; *id.*, *Many Things in Parables. Jesus and His Modern Critics*, Louisville/London 2004; L. Schottroff, *The Parables of Jesus*, Minneapolis 2006. Because of her steadfast refusal to parse the text in a way that distinguishes the evangelist's social and conceptual interests from

of course, that all of the actions in a parable must be predictable or banal; indeed, as Hedrick emphasizes, "reality is usually quite unpredictable."⁵ One of the hallmarks of at least some of Jesus' parables is that they tell of unusual actions or unexpected reactions. But they do so by setting a context which invokes the typicalities and commonplaces of ancient Mediterranean life—the threats to life that travel posed, the ever-present danger of managers defrauding their employers, the commonplace of élite inviting each other to dinners, and the perfectly normal situation of strife between older and younger brothers. This implies that if the parables are to have their full effect, it must be clear to the interpreter, as it was no doubt clear to the first auditors, just what were the commonplace and typical features in the story, and which are singular or unusual.

The history of parable interpretation is littered with disputes concerning which elements represent typical and unexceptional elements, which elements were unusual, and which are downright incredible or fantastic. Much is at stake in deciding these questions, since we approach the boundaries between realistic fiction, in which all actions, however unusual, must belong to a repertoire of empirically credible representations,⁶ symbolic narrative, which might include non-realistic elements designed deliberately to evoke other narratives or beliefs, and the fantastic narrative modes of apocalyptic. Would a vineyard owner, whose agents-slaves were abused by refractory tenants, send his son as a last resort? Or does this representation move well beyond of credible modes of dispute settlement and transgress the boundary between realistic and fantastic narrative? Does this detail have meaning only as part of the Christian meta-discourse of the sending of God's son to Israel? Does the owner's destruction of the tenants belong to the repertoire of imaginable strategies for the

those of earlier levels of the story, Schottroff thwarts her own desire for a realistic and agrarian reading of the parable, since both Mark and Matthew engage in generous allegorizing of the parables and add details that are not susceptible of a realistic interpretation. Schottroff also fails to distinguish between Luke's critique of the culture of benefaction and interests in economic redistribution, which belongs to the discourse of the middling rich, and discourse that is typical of sectors much less advantaged than Luke's addressees. For a "realistic" approach to the Parable of the Tenants, see J.S. Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard. Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine*, Tübingen 2006, esp. chaps. 5, 9.

⁵ Hedrick, *Parables*, p. 42.

⁶ See T.J. Prenzler, *Ideology and Narrative Realism: A Critique of Post-Althusserian Anti-Realism*, Ph.D. diss., Griffiths University, Australia, 1991, pp. 129-159.

management of agrarian conflict, or is it designed to evoke Isa. 5:5, 7 and to anticipate apocalyptic fantasies of divine destruction? Does a real shepherd, having lost one sheep, abandon his flock in search of the lost sheep? Or would another vineyard owner go to the market place in the middle of the day to hire extra workers? Was one drachma a generous wage or a normal daily wage? At stake in these questions is the *kind* of discourse that Jesus' parables represent.

Often such disputes are refereed by resorting either to modern commonsense or to ambiguous biblical or Mishnaic data, whose pertinence and date are open to question. What has usually gone unnoticed is that, as Dodd's statement implies, Greco-Egyptian papyri provide a wealth of social, economic and legal data that may illumine precisely the processes or actions that are the subject of the parables.⁷ In the case of the parable of the Returning Son (Luke 15:11-32) it has already been shown by Wolfgang Pöhlmann that the son's demand, δός μοι τὸ ἐπιβάλλον μέρος τῆς οὐσίας (15:12), employs a formula that is extraordinarily common in Greco-Egyptian documentary papyri describing an individual's portion of a loan,⁸ or of a tenancy agreement,⁹ or of taxes,¹⁰ or of a liturgy,¹¹ or of an inheritance.¹² The

⁷ For abbreviations of papyri, see J.F. Oates/R.S. Bagnall/W.H. Willis, *Checklist of Editions of Greek Papyri and Ostraca*, Oakville 2001, online: <http://SCRIPTORIUM.LIB.DUKE.EDU/PAPYRUS/TEXTS/CLIST.HTML>. For recent dating of papyri, see the Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens, online: <http://www.rzuser.uni-heidelberg.de/~gv0/gvz.html>.

⁸ W. Pöhlmann, "Die Abschichtung des Verlorenen Sohnes (Lk 15:12f) und die erzählte Welt der Parabel," *ZNW* 70 (1979), pp. 194-213, esp. 205 n. 45. E.g., *P.Athen* 1 29.10 (Theadelphia, 121 CE): ἀπέχειν ... [ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς] ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι, αἱ εἰσὶν τὸ ἐπιβάλλον αὐτοῖς Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ Διδυμαρίῳ] ἡμῖς μέρος ἀργυρίου δραχμῶν διακοσίων τεσσαράκοντα, "to receive ... 120 silver drachmae, which is half the share falling to Ptolemaios and Didymarion, of 240 silver drachmae."

⁹ E.g., *BGU* X 1946.7-8 (Tholtis, near Oxyrhynchus, 213/212 BCE): τὸ ἐπιβάλλον αὐτῷ μέρος τῶν ἐκφοριῶν κατὰ τὴν συγγραφὴν [τῆς μισ] [ὁ] ὥσεως τὴν κειμένην παρὰ συγγραφοφύλακι Ἡρακλείτῳ Κυρηναίῳ τῶν Φίλων[ος], "the portion of the rent that falls to him in accord with the lease that was deposited with the *syngraphophylax*, Herakleitos the Cyrenian, son of Philo."

¹⁰ E.g., *P.Mich.* V 245.13-15 (Tebtynis, 47 CE): διαγράψει χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπιβάλλοντος αὐτῷ μέρους τῶν δημοσίων ἄλλας ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς ἑξήκοντα ἕξ, "he shall pay, apart from the share of the public taxes which falls to him, an additional sixty-six drachmae in silver."

¹¹ E.g., *P.Oxy.* XXXVIII 2853.6-7 (Oxyrhynchus, 245/246 CE): προσεληλύθαμεν Σωτήρι καὶ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὡς χρηματίζουσιν ἀξιοῦντες αὐτοὺς τὸ ἐπιβάλλον αὐτοῖς μέρος τῆς διώρυγος ἐργάσασθαι. οἱ δὲ μηδὲν λόγῳ χρησάμενοι ἐπῆλθον ἡμῖν καὶ πληγαῖς ἤκισαντο, "we have approached Soter and his brother and while they were engaged in business asked them to do their share of the work on the dike. But without saying a word they fell upon us and injured us with blows."

contention of this paper is that papyri can contribute to an understanding of other aspects of this parable.

One of the interpretive issues in the parable of the Returning Son concerns another aspect of the younger son's request, δός μοι τὸ ἐπιβάλλον μέρος τῆς οὐσίας (15:12). Is this the kind of request that might be made of a father and, to be more specific, was there a legal instrument by which the request could be effected? On this point commentators are divided.

On the one hand, William Oesterley opined that the request was natural, especially coming from a younger son who could inherit only one-third of the farm. Under these circumstances he could be expected to liquidate his portion of the inheritance and depart.¹³ B.D. Smith, appealing to the warning of Sir. 33:19-23 not to give property to another during one's lifetime, inferred that just such transferences must have been known in the first century CE, and consequently, the younger son's request was not blameworthy.¹⁴ Likewise Eta Linnemann concluded that the son's request was nothing out of the ordinary: the family farm was not divisible, which left a younger son with little to do but emigrate if he did not wish to remain on the land. The younger son, Linnemann thinks, would have had access only to

¹² E.g., *P. Mich.* V 322.7 (Tebtynis, 47 CE): καὶ τὸ ἐπιβάλλον μέρος ὑποδοχείου καὶ ὕδατος καὶ ἰχθύας καὶ χοῦς καὶ φρέατος καὶ κηλωνείων καὶ μαγδῶλου καὶ τῶν συγκυρόντων πάντων κοινῶν καὶ ἀδιαίρετων πρὸς τὴν προγεγραμμένην Τετοσίριν τὴν καὶ Διονυσίαν, "the share that belongs to him of the reservoir and water and fishing and earthworks and well and swing-beam and watchtower and all the appurtenances held in common and (which has) not been divided in favour of the aforesaid Tetosiris, also called Dionysia"; *P. Oxy.* IV 715 (Oxyrhynchus, 131 CE): ἀπογραφόμεθα ... τὸ ἐπιβάλλον[ον] αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ Τοεμίσει τρίτον μέρος οἰκίας καὶ τὸ ἐπιβάλλον αὐτῷ μέρος ψιλῶ τόπου, καὶ πρότερον τῆς ἀδελφῆς αὐτοῦ Ἑλένης Γοργίου μετρός τῆς αὐτῆς Ταποντώτος κατὰ διαθήκην τὴν καὶ λυθεῖσαν τῷ ἰβ (ἔτει) Ἀδριανοῦ Καίσαρος τοῦ κυρίου, "we wish to register ... the property that has fallen to him [our father], namely a one-third share of a house in Toemisis, and the share of open ground, and what formerly belonged to his sister Helen the daughter of Gorgios, the mother of Tapontos, in accord with the will that was opened in the 12th year of Hadrian Caesar the lord ..."

¹³ W.O.E. Oesterley, *The Gospel Parables in the Light of Their Jewish Background*, London 1936, p. 184: "It was only the younger son who would expect to receive this during his father's lifetime, and the father's consent was purely of goodwill, there was no law to force him to do it. The first-born, on the other hand, could obviously not make such a request, especially in such a case as that before us in which the father is a landed proprietor."

¹⁴ B.T.D. Smith, *The Parables in the Synoptic Gospels*, Cambridge 1937, p. 194. He concludes that the rabbinic ruling that restricted the right of disposal in such cases was "evidently later than Ecclesiasticus and this parable" (p. 195).

the movables which could then have been liquidated.¹⁵ Brandon Scott interprets the parable as just the kind of case that Sirach warned against; although it was not the norm for fathers to distribute property in this way, it was also not unknown. The later Mishnaic ruling that restricted a son's right of disposal "was apparently worked out to avoid the bad experience underlying Sirach and our parable."¹⁶

Jeremias also treated the scenario in Luke 15:12 realistically, observing that according to *m.B.B.* 8:7 a deed of gift normally did not carry with it the right of disposal, but that a ruling in *t.B.B.* 2:5, according to which a "son who took his share in his father's estate" is able to secure title though usucaption (*hazaqah*), implied not only possession but usufruct.¹⁷ The older son, by contrast, could not obtain the usufruct of the land willed to him, since the father was still alive and was to be maintained from the estate.¹⁸ According to Derrett, even though the father was by no means obliged to divide his property, still less give the younger son the right of disposal, the father "adopted the policy of treating the nearly grown-up son with kindness."¹⁹ The "sin" to which the son later confesses is not, accordingly, rebellion or dishonouring his father by an inappropriate request or even dissipation, but rather the neglect of his duty to use his property in support of his father as long as he was alive. One could add that the father, correspondingly, might be thought foolhardy, not for agreeing to the division, but for assigning the right of disposal.

Others, however, insist that the scenario in 15:12 is highly unusual if not utterly unrealistic. Basing his conclusions on the observation of modern Middle Eastern culture, Kenneth Bailey opines that it would highly unusual for a younger son to demand that his father divide the

¹⁵ Linnemann, *Parables of Jesus*, pp. 74-75, 150, citing Gen. 24:36; 25:5-6; *b.B. Meš* 75b; *m.B.B.* 8:7; Sir. 33:19-23.

¹⁶ B.B. Scott, *Hear Then the Parable. A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*, Minneapolis 1989, p. 111.

¹⁷ *t.B.B.* 2:5: "Under what circumstances have they ruled, 'A sharecropper is given an oath when he is not subject to a claim?' So long as he is a sharecropper. When a sharecropper leaves his status as sharecropper of this field, he is like anybody else [i.e., can obtain title through usucaption]. A guardian -when a guardian leaves his status as a guardian, he is like anybody else. A son who took his share of his father's estate, a woman who was divorced, they are like everybody else" (Jacob Neusner, trans., *The Tosefta* 4, New York 1977-1986, p. 151).

¹⁸ Jeremias, *Parables*, pp. 128-129.

¹⁹ J.D.M. Derrett, "Law in the New Testament: The Parable of the Prodigal Son," in: *id.*, *Law in the New Testament*, London 1970, pp. 100-125, esp. 106.

inheritance prior to his death.²⁰ Dismissing the view that Sir. 33:19-23 implies that fathers might indeed partition their property, he argues that the son's request is tantamount to wishing the father dead.²¹ The point of the parable, according to Bailey, is that

the prodigal requests and receives possession and disposition of his portion of the inheritance. Both requests are unheard of in Eastern life and thought. Each means the son is in a hurry for his father to die. The father is expected to refuse and punish the prodigal. Instead, in an unprecedented act of love, the request is granted. The older son is expected to refuse his share and to fulfil the roll of reconciler. He fails on both counts. These failures indicate that his relationship to both his brother and his father are broken. Both sons fail even to try to live together in unity.²²

For Bailey the exceptional and unrealistic features of the story are precisely what carry its interpretation: the son's outrageous request; the father's unprecedented response as an act of love; the father's unexpected and humiliating demonstration of love—all these point to a meta-level of Christian theology, according to which

sin is ... a broken relationship which [the prodigal] cannot restore. Repentance is ... acceptance of grace and confessions of unworthiness ... The visible demonstration of love in humiliation is seen to have close overtones of the atoning work of Christ.²³

Arland Hultgren takes a similar view: "There is no evidence of law or custom to suggest that it was a normal procedure to pass on one's property while still alive, nor for a potential heir to ask for it, although it would not be inconceivable for a parent to initiate such as course of action."²⁴ The son thus effectively wishes the father dead,

²⁰ But contrast A.M. Rihbani, *The Syrian Christ*, Pontiac 2003, p. 95: "The custom of a father dividing his property among his grown sons before his death prevails much more extensively in the East than in the West... [A]s a general rule the father who does not divide his property legally between his sons before his death leaves to them a situation fraught with danger. Litigation in such cases is very slow and uncertain."

²¹ K.E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant. A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke*, Grand Rapids 1976, p. 164; similarly, G. Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, New York 1960, p. 126; G. Forbes, "Repentance and Conflict in the Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)," *JETS* 42 (1999), pp. 211-229, esp. 215.

²² Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, p. 169.

²³ Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, p. 206.

²⁴ A.J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus. A Commentary*, Grand Rapids 2000, p. 73, citing Derrett, "Prodigal Son," pp. 104-106; Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, pp. 112-114.

although Hultgren agrees that his “sin” is his failure to provide for his father.²⁵

The unreality of the parable’s representation of the younger son and its extravagant depiction of the reactions of the father allow Hultgren to propose a symbolic reading: the action of both sons provide a foil for the father. “No earthly father loves and acts like this one, but God does.”²⁶ A symbolic reading of the parable is in fact not disturbed by nonrealistic actions, since precisely these point to some meta-level of discourse as the true meaning of the parable.²⁷

1. *Types of Dispositions*

The commentators discussed above base their reading of the parable on a very limited set of data. Sir. 33:20-24 is a key text:

To son or wife, to brother or friend, do not give power over yourself, as long as you live (ἐν ζωῇ σου); and do not give your property to another, lest you change your mind and must ask for it. While you are still alive and have breath in you, do not let any one take your place. For it is better that your children should ask from you than that you should look to the hand of your sons ... At the time when you end the days of your life, in the hour of death, distribute your inheritance (ἐν καιρῷ τελευτῆς διάδος κληρονομίαν).

According to Bailey, Sirach’s warning is no different from Southerners warning each other not to trust Yankees. No reasonable person would conclude from such a warning that many Southerners actually trusted Yankees. But both the argument of Sirach and its context makes Bailey’s conclusion very unlikely. The argument is far too detailed to be the kind of stock warning Bailey imagines. If everyone already agreed that devolution of property on one’s kin was a palpable mistake, Sirach would not have had to buttress his admonition as he does. If such a practice were unanimously recognized as foolish, it would hardly appear as an admonition in need of defence, but would more likely appear as an example of stupidity buttressing

²⁵ Hultgren, *Parables of Jesus*, p. 77.

²⁶ Hultgren, *Parables of Jesus*, p. 85.

²⁷ B. Jackson, *Essays on Halakhah in the New Testament*, Leiden 2007, p. 114, remarks that “any such views suggest a ‘strong’ understanding of the overt theological meaning, in terms of sin, repentance and forgiveness, and may indicate a supersessionist figurative message.”

another maxim or admonition on foolish behaviour. Moreover, Sirach introduces his admonition by the solemn invocation, "Hear me, you who are great among the people, and you leaders of the congregation, hearken" (33:19).²⁸ Thus, not only does Sirach presuppose that the simple disposition of property was possible and practiced, but that the form of disposition employed afforded no protection for the testator.²⁹

The other piece of evidence regularly cited is from almost four centuries later, in *m.B.B.* 8 which concerns the division of parental property prior to the testator's death and various protections afforded the testator (none of which appears to be in place in the parable).

The Mishnah observes a distinction between a דייתיקי (= διαθήκη), a disposition in contemplation of death whose provisions were covered by the relevant laws of Num. 27:7-11 and Deut. 21:15-17 on the one hand,³⁰ and on the other, a מתנה ("gift" = δόσις), which involves a transference of ownership while the donor is still alive, even if the donor retains usufruct.³¹ The latter allowed a donor to make a division of property that is not in accord with the Torah, provided that he did not use the words "by inheritance" (משום ירושה).³² The key distinction, at least according to the Mishnah and the Bavli, is that a

²⁸ R. Yaron, *Gifts in Contemplation of Death in Jewish and Roman Law*, Oxford 1967, p. 8: "The passage as a whole is strong proof that the writer [Sirach] knew of no possible arrangement by which one could dispose of one's property and yet retain control of it till the time of death."

²⁹ A partial division of property is indicated in Tob. 8:20-21 where Tobit's father in law gave Tobit "half of Raguel's property (ἡμισυ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῦ)" and sent him back to his father, promising that the rest would be his "when my wife and I die."

³⁰ Yaron, *Gifts*, pp. 19-20. See *m.B.B.* 8:6: "If a person died and a will (דייתיקי) was found tied to his thigh, it is of no legal value. If thereby he made an assignment to someone, whether [this person is one] of the heirs or not, his instructions are legally valid."

³¹ As Yaron (*Gifts*, p. 23) points out, *t.B.B.* 8:9 seems to take for granted that a 'will' is made in ailing health, while a 'gift' is made in good health (but see below): "A healthy person who wrote a will (דייתיקי)—a dying man who wrote his property as a gift (מתנה)—even though he gave possession after a gift, he has done nothing at all. But he who writes over his property in the name of his fellow, and he gave possession after the gift, his statement is confirmed."

³² *m.B.B.* 8:5: "[If] any one said, 'My firstborn son, shall not receive a double portion,' [or] 'x, my son, shall not be heir with his brothers', his instructions are disregarded, because he made a stipulation [which is] contrary to what is written in the Torah. If one distributed his property orally, [and] gave to one [son] more, and to [another] one less, or [if] he assigned to the first born a share equal to that of his brothers, his arrangements are valid. If, [however], he said, 'as an inheritance,' his instructions are disregarded. [If] he wrote, either at the beginning or the middle or the end, 'as a gift,' his instructions are valid."

“gift” must contain the words “from today and after my death”³³; *m.B.B.* 8:7 reflects this formula:

If a person [desires] to give his estate in writing to his sons, he must write, “[This estate is assigned] from this day and after [my] death” (מהיום ולאחר מתיא); These are the words of R. Judah.

Under the rubric of “gifts” early rabbinic thinking imagined two forms, one, a “simple gift” which became effective immediately and was independent of the donor’s death, and another in which usufruct was retained until the donor’s death. While most of the discussion in *m.B.B.* 8 concerns the latter, there are traces of the former in other rabbinic literature. For example, *t.B.B.* 8:10 holds:

Which is a will (דייתיקי)? Be it to me to stand and to be, but if I shall die my goods shall be given to X. Which is a ‘gift’ (מתנה)? As from today (מהיום) my goods shall be given to X.

This form of “gift” evidently did not have to await the testator’s death to become effective, nor did it involve the testator retaining control over the property. It is this form of disposition, according to Reuven Yaron, that is the subject of the lament in *b.B. Meṣ* 75b.³⁴

Our Rabbis taught: Three cry out and are not answered, namely, he who has money and lends it without witnesses; he who makes someone a master over himself; and he over whom his wife rules. ‘He who makes a master over himself,’ what does this mean?—Some say: He who attributes his wealth to a Gentile; others: *He who transfers his property to his children in his lifetime* (הכותב נכסיו לבניו בחייו); others: He who is badly-off in one town and does not go [to seek his fortune] elsewhere.

Contemporary Roman law did not envisage a testamentary division of an entire property *inter vivos*. Indeed, Schulz declares,

³³ The distinction is made in *b.B. Meṣ*. 19a: “What is meant by wills (דייתיקי)?—[Documents which contain the words:] ‘This shall be established and executed,’ so that when [the author of the document] dies, his property becomes the possession of the person named [in the document]. [What are] deeds of gift (מתנה)?—All [documents conferring a gift] which contain [the words]: ‘From today and after my death’ (מהיום ואחר מתיא). But does this mean that only if it is written [in the document] ‘From today and after my death,’ the person acquires [the gift], but if not, he does not acquire it!—Abaye answered: The meaning is this: ‘Which gift of a healthy person is like the gift of a dying person in that [the person named] does not acquire it until after the death [of the donor]?’ Every [gift regarding which] it is written [in the document conferring it]: ‘From to-day and after my death.’”

³⁴ Yaron, *Gifts*, p. 27.

It is incredible that a testator should ever have conveyed his whole present and future estate to somebody with immediate effect; he would then have been entirely dependent upon the goodwill of the *familiae emptor*.³⁵

As Roman jurists recognized, the simple gift carried with it the risk that the donor would not be maintained from his property. This perhaps accounts for the fact that in the Ushan period (after 135 CE) rabbis enacted rulings to insure that parents were maintained from gifts given to children.³⁶

The second form of gift in which the owner retains usufruct, called מתנת בריא,³⁷ is described in the continuation of *m.B.B.* 8:7:

If a person [desires] to give his estate in writing to his sons, he must write, '[this estate is assigned] from this day and after [my] death' ... If a person assigned his estate in writing to his son [to be his] after his death, the father may not sell [it] because it is assigned in writing to the son, and the son may not sell [it] because it is in the possession of the father (ברשות האב). If the father sold [the estate] the sale is valid until his death. If the son sold [it], the buyer has no claim whatsoever upon it until the father's death. The father plucks (the fruit) and feeds whomsoever he wants; and whatever he left (already) plucked belongs to the heirs.

The first stipulation—that the father may not subsequently alienate the property—suggests that the מתנת בריא was considered to be non-revocable, once uttered. But the other limitation is imposed on the son, who is disabled from alienating the property, since the father is to enjoy usufruct. From the donor's perspective, this form corrected the deficiency present in the simple gift by ensuring that the donor be maintained from the estate even after it becomes the property of the donee.³⁸

³⁵ F. Schulz, *Classical Roman Law*, Oxford 1951, p. 242.

³⁶ Yaron, *Gifts*, p. 27, citing *y.Ket.* 4:8: "Resh Laqish (said) in the name of R. Judah b. Hananiah: it was enacted at Usha concerning one who assigns his goods to his sons, that he and his wife are maintained out of them." Yaron notes that while the ruling seems to have been accepted in Palestine, there is evidence that it was not in fact accepted in Babylonia, since there are still cases of sons being forced to maintain their parents (e.g., *b.Ket.* 49b).

³⁷ *b.B.B.* 135b: "Abaye replied: [It is] this that was meant: 'Which is the gift of a person in good health (מתנת בריא) that is [regarded] as the gift of a dying man in that no possession [of its fruit] is acquired until after death?—Any [deed] in which it is written, 'from this day and after my death'."

³⁸ Thus it is not safe to assume that the מתנת בריא always carried with it the right of usufruct for the testator, as E. Bammel, "Gottes δαθήκη (Gal 3:15–17) und das jüdische Rechtsdenken."

As Yaron observes, the phrase *מהיום ולאחר מתי* probably reflects the Greco-Egyptian formula *μετὰ τὴν τελευτήν*, found as early as 127 BCE in *BGU* III 993, and frequently thereafter.³⁹ This document, called a *δόσις*, is the disposition of Psenthotēs, the warden of a temple of Isis, who transferred some of his land and one-seventh of his priestly income to his daughter Tasemis, and the remainder of his property to Tsennesis his wife. Although the deed of gift states that the division is made *μετὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τελευτήν* (ii 10), the fact that the land transfer tax was paid at the time of the gift (iv 4) indicates that the land (and presumably the right to derive income from the temple) had transferred to the daughter immediately. Kreller argues that *BGU* III 993 is formulated on the assumption that the usufruct would remain with the testator until his death.⁴⁰ The deed of gift, however, says nothing of maintenance of the testator from the daughter's portion, and nothing is said of the six-sevenths of the priestly income, which presumably remained with the testator. What is noteworthy is that the declaration ends with *μη ἐξέστω δὲ μηδενὶ τῶν ἄλλων αὐτοῦ υἱῶν ἀντιποιήσασθαι | περὶ μηδενὸς τῶν προγεγραμμένων, κυριευέτωσαν δ' ἐκάστη κατὰ τὴν σημαινομένην διαστολήν*, "it shall not be lawful for any other of his sons to lay a claim regarding any of the things mentioned above; let each (i.e., the daughter and wife) have legal possession in accord with the statement that has been made" (iii 12-13).

In regard to this clause, Kreller takes the view that iii 12-13 does not amount to a formal disinheriting of Psenthotēs' sons—it does not take the form of a disinheritance—, but could be either a "gift" employed to circumvent normal customs of inheritance, or, more likely, that there existed separate and parallel divisions of Psenthotēs' property stipulating the shares that ought to go to the sons.⁴¹ The

NTS 6 (1960), pp. 313-319, has assumed. So rightly, J.J. Hughes, "Hebrews IX 15ff. and Galatians III 15ff.: A Study in Covenant Practice and Procedure," *NovT* 21 (1979), pp. 27-96, esp. 73.

³⁹ Yaron, *Gifts*, p. 46.

⁴⁰ H. Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen auf Grund der gräko-ägyptischen Papyrusurkunden*, Stuttgart 1919, p. 218.

⁴¹ Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen*, p. 217. Kreller points to the fact that some demotic wills one finds both a document indicating the division of the entire estate in a single document, and "die Teilung durch gesonderte gegenseitige Übereignung einzelner Stücke" (p. 76). *BGU* III 993, which is often taken to be either a translation of a demotic will or influenced by the construction of demotic wills (O. Montevocchi, "Ricerche di sociologia nei documenti dell' Egitto greco-romano, I: I testamenti," *Aeg* 15 [1935], pp. 67-121, esp. 85; R. Tauben-

difficulty with Kreller's interpretation is that no mention is made of any other property besides that given to Tasemis and her mother, and the mother appears to have received the remainder of Psenthotēs' possessions, listed in considerable detail:

Τσεννήσει δὲ τῇ σημαιομένῃ αὐτοῦ γυναικὶ τὰ λοιπὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτῷ πάντα | γῶν τε καὶ οἰκίων καὶ ἀμπελώνων καὶ παστοφορίων καὶ γέρωσ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ κατ' οἰκίαν ἐπιπλά πάντα καὶ ὄσπρια πάν<τα> | καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο ὑπάρχον αὐτῷ ἐστὶν ἢ<τ>ο>ι κατὰ συνβόλαια ἢ κατ' ἐπ-
ενέχυρον καὶ ἐν τισιν ἐν πίστει πυροῦ τε καὶ κριθῆς | ὀλύρας φακοῦ
ἀράκου καὶ χαλκωμάτων καὶ ἱματισμοῦ (iii 9-12)

(and) to Tsennesis, who has been indicated as his wife, all the remainder of his possessions, his lands and houses, and vineyards and priest's chambers, and gifts and the other furniture in the house and all the food, and if there is any other possession of his either as things lent out or as things taken in surety, and in things (given) in credit for wheat or barley, rice, lentils, chickling, and any copper utensils, or clothing.

In order to sustain Kreller's reading he has to assume that Psenthotēs' other property had *already* been distributed to his sons, and all that was left was that intended for Tamesis and Tsennesis.⁴² In this case the sons' portions probably should be regarded as *Abschichtungen*—gifts intended in lieu of inheritance. Yet this does not seem an obvious way to read iii 9-12, especially in view of the final clause, "if there is any other possession" or in view of the registrars' comments in iv 3, which describes the deed as covering "all of Psenthotēs' land" (πάντων τῶν Ψενθῶτου ὑπαρχόντων). And the prohibition of the sons suing the women seems too categorical to allow for the possibility that they had already received some property and might be interested in more. We are left, then, two possibilities: that this δόσις in fact amounted to a way to disperse Psenthotēs property to the children he favoured and to exclude those he did not; or that the sons were only meant to inherit the wife's portion after her death, and that this deed was intended to safeguard Tasemis' portion *prior to Psenthotēs'* death.

schlag, *The Law of Greco-Roman Egypt in the Light of the Papyri: 332 B.C.-620 A.D.*, Warsaw²1955, p. 205) would then be an example of this latter form.

⁴² Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen*, p. 217: "Diese [anderen Urkunden] müssten allerdings, streng genommen, dieser Urkunde zeitlich vorausgegangen sein und dürften keine Gesamtvergabe, wie sie hier vorliegt, enthalten haben."

Regardless of how these interpretive problems are solved, BGU III 993 provides an early instance of a deed of gift (δόσις) in which at least fictively property is transferred to a donee only after the death of the testator, but in fact became the property of the donee immediately.

A document from first-century Egypt which provides a closer analogy to the מתנת בריא of *m.B.B.* 8:7 is *P.Mich.* V 321 (42 CE). The testator, Orseus, divided his property among his four children and agreed not to alienate the property or to mortgage it. Although the division supposedly took effect only after the testator's death (ll. 3, 13-14: μετὰ τὴν ἐμὴν τελευτήν), the fact that one of the beneficiaries, Nestnephis, was to assume the taxes on the property indicates that the land had in fact become the property of the donees. Nevertheless, Nestnephis was required to provide for his father's maintenance in the annual amount of 12 artabae of grain (363 kgs.) and 12 silver drachmae for clothing, oil and expenses, as well as pay his father's flute-tax.⁴³

From only four years later *P.Mich.* V 322 (46 CE) offers a similar deed of gift. The testator, Psuphis acknowledges (ὁμολογεῖ) that he divided his property among three sons, a grandson, and two daughters. The deed is explicit that the division is "from the present" (ll. 2, 17, 22, 29, 38, 40, 42: ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν) and that the testators, Psuphis and his wife, are barred from selling, mortgaging or otherwise alienating the property or altering the terms of the deed (l. 30: μὴ ἔχειν αὐτοὺς ... ἐξουσίαν μήτε πωλεῖν μηδὲ ὑποτίθεσθαι μηδὲ ἐξαλλοτριοῦν μηδὲ ἐτέροις καταλείπειν μηδὲ ἄλλως πῶς καταχρηματίσαι κατὰ μηδεμίαν παρεύρεσιν). But according to the δόσις their heirs shall have the power to sell, mortgage, alienate or lease it *without requiring the consent of either parent*. In exchange, the heirs are obliged to maintain their parents at the monthly rate of 2 artabae (60 kgs) of wheat, six kotyles (2.4 litres) of oil, and to pay 300 drachmae for clothing and expenses and eventually, to pay for funerals for their parents.

The similarities to the מתנת בריא of later Mishnaic rulings are obvious, as are the differences. Although in all three cases, the testator's

⁴³ For other instances of such donations, see Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen*, pp. 215-23; Taubenschlag, *Law of Greco-Roman Egypt*, pp. 204-227; Montevecchi, "Ricerche di sociologia"; E.M. Husselman, "Donationes Mortis Causa from Tebtunis," *TAPA* 88 (1957), pp. 135-154.

property is effectively transferred to the heirs at the time of the deed and although the two Michigan texts disable the testator from selling or otherwise alienating the property, the Ptolemaic and early Roman deeds of gift do not place restrictions on the heirs' right of disposal. This is presumably because whether or not the heirs were able to sell the property, they were still bound to a fixed sum of support for the testator(s) stated in the agreement. In the case of the Mishnaic מתנת בריא, however, we do not have actual contracts but rather the Mishnah's guiding principles. Whether Palestinian deeds of gifts stipulated actual amounts of support is unknown; instead, the Mishnah assumes that although the title of the property has been transferred to the heir, the testator retains usufruct until his death, and hence, the property cannot be alienated.

Returning to the Lukan parable, it is hardly the case that the mere desire to divide a property prior to the death of a testator amounted to wishing the testator dead. Although Bailey and Hultgren make much of the fact that it was the younger son who initiated the division, it is hardly a safe conclusion that this was either unprecedented or an act of rebellion.⁴⁴ In the case of the Greco-Egyptian deeds of gift discussed above, we simply cannot know who initiated the division of property. These deeds are always framed as objective *homologiae* of the testator; but this is strictly formulaic. It implies nothing at all about the actual circumstances that led to the division. It is unlikely that the division could have been effected without the testator's consent. But the division may have been instigated by a spouse, keen to secure a child's inheritance against possible rivals, or by an adult son or daughter, interested in preserving his or her stake against the possible infringement of siblings or others, as might have been the case with BGU III 993.

⁴⁴ Pöhlmann, "Die Abschiebung des Verlorenen Sohnes," pp. 200-201: "Der jüngere Sohn unserer Parabel erweist sich also nicht schon durch seine Forderung als der rebellische, abtrünnige 'Verlorene Sohn'; sein Wunsch ist für Juden und Griechen aus ihren verschiedenen Rechtsordnung heraus gleichermaßen verständlich und akzeptabel." Jackson, *Halakhah*, p. 116 n. 11: "Jewish sources give no support to a major plank of Bailey's interpretation of the parable, that the prodigal, in seeking the advance, wishes his father dead ... Here and elsewhere, Bailey works from a methodologically questionable premise: that one should interpret both the parable and near contemporary Jewish sources against a construct of 'Middle Eastern' custom heavily informed by medieval Arab Christian interpretation and contemporary Arab custom."

2. *Divisio inter vivos*

The legal situation that Jeremias proposed for the parable is the מתנת בריא, with the qualification that the father agreed to give the younger son the right of disposal (and usufruct) as well as possession, while the elder son was given only possession.⁴⁵ This would be comparable to the scenario in *P. Mich.* V 321 where only one of the donees was made responsible for the maintenance of the testator. Yet Luke's parable suggests that the elder brother is not in possession of his portion; in 15:29 the father still controls the land, and the father's conciliatory words in 15:31, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔμὰ σὰ ἔστιν, reinforces the conclusion that the elder son had not formally received his share of the estate.

As a means of accounting for the apparent anomaly of the younger son obtaining the right of disposal and the elder son remaining dependent on the father, David Daube suggested that the situation of the concerning the younger son is akin to the German principle of *Abschichtung* or "dismission"—a division of property not in contemplation of death but by which the legatee loses all future claim on the estate.⁴⁶ This implies, as the parable seems to confirm, that upon his return the younger son can expect nothing of the estate, that the father is still in control of the remains of the estate, and that the elder brother awaits to be installed as heir.⁴⁷

Daube could point to Gen. 25:6, which reports that to the sons of his concubines Abraham "gave gifts while he was still living": נתן אברהם מתנת ... בעודנו חי (LXX: ἔδωκεν Ἀβραὰμ δόματα ... ἔτι ζῶντος αὐτοῦ) and sent them away. These gifts, presumably, were designed to secure the entire inheritance for Isaac and to obviate any rival claims, as indeed is suggested by Gen. 25:5, "Abraham gave all he

⁴⁵ Jeremias, *Parables*, p. 129.

⁴⁶ D. Daube, "Inheritance in Two Lukan Parables," in: C. Carmichael (ed.), *Collected Works of David Daube*, Berkeley 2000, p. 813, based on the earlier work of E. Rabel, "Elterliche Teilung," in *Festschrift zur 49. Versammlung deutscher Philologen und Schulmänner in Basel im Jahre 1907*, Basel 1907, pp. 524-538. Pöhlmann, "Die Abschichtung des Verlorenen Sohnes," p. 195, cites the definition, "vermögensrechtliche Verselbständigung eines Hauskindes, das aus diesem Anlaß aus dem Haushalt seines Gewalthabers ausschied und einen eigen Hausstand gründete."

⁴⁷ Daube, "Inheritance," p. 815; similarly, Pöhlmann, "Die Abschichtung des Verlorenen Sohnes," p. 199; Yaron, *Gifts*, p. 44.

had to Isaac."⁴⁸ That Gen. 25:6 was in fact understood in this way well after the first century CE is confirmed by *b.Sanh.* 91a and *Gen.Rab.* 61:7 (both citing Gen. 25:6).⁴⁹ Yaron adds to this that the rabbinic exclusion of "sons who have shared" [i.e., been dismissed] from the Mishnah's prohibition of a son usucapting his father's estates implies an acknowledgement of the principle of dismission.⁵⁰

Ptolemaic and early Roman Egypt provide other examples of divisions of property prior to the death of the testator, in which full possession is transferred to the donee. As early as the third century BCE *P.Petr.* III 2 (238/7 BCE) is a declaration in which the testator,

⁴⁸ Daube, "Inheritance," pp. 811-812.

⁴⁹ *b.Sanh.* 91a: "On another occasion the Ishmaelites and the Keturcans came for a lawsuit against the Jews before Alexander of Macedon. They pleaded thus: Canaan belongs jointly to all of us, for it is written, Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son; and it is [further] written, And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son. Thereupon Gebiha b. Pesisa said to the Sages: 'Give me permission to go and plead against them before Alexander of Macedon. Should they defeat me then say, "You have defeated one of our ignorant men"; while if I defeat them, say, "The Law of Moses has defeated you."' So they gave him permission, and he went and pleaded against them. 'Whence do ye adduce your proof?' asked he. 'From the Torah,' they replied. 'Then I too,' said he, 'will bring you proof only from the Torah, for it is written, And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts: if a father made a bequest to his children in his lifetime and sent them away from each other, has one any claim upon the other?'"

Daube ("Inheritance," p. 812) points out that much later, the gifts of Gen. 25:6 were still treated as obviating any claim on the inheritance of Isaac: "In the days of Alexander of Macedon the Ishmaelites came to dispute the birthright with Israel and they were accompanied by two evil families, the Canaanites and the Egyptians. 'Who shall go to plead against them?' it was asked. Said Gebiah, the son of Kosem: 'I will go and plead against them.' 'Take heed not to let the land fall into their hands,' they cautioned him. 'I will go and argue with them,' he replied; 'if I defeat them, 'tis well; while if not, ye can say, "Who is this hunchback to take up our case?'" So he went to debate with them. Said Alexander of Macedon to them: 'Who is the plaintiff, and who the defendant?' Said the Ishmaelites: 'We are the claimants, and we base our claim on their own laws. It is written, But he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the hated, etc. [Deut. 21:17], and Ishmael was the firstborn.' Said Gebiah, the son of Kosem: 'Your Majesty! Cannot a man do as he wishes to his sons?' 'Yes,' replied he. 'Then,' pursued he, 'surely it is written, And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac' [Gen. 25:5]. 'But where is the deed of gift [to his other sons]?' He replied: 'But unto the sons of the concubines, that Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts.' [Gen. 25:6] Thereupon they departed in shame" (*Gen.Rab.* 61:7 on 25:6).

⁵⁰ Yaron, *Gifts*, pp. 43-44, citing *t.B.B.* 2:5: "A son who has shared [נָחַל], a wife divorced, are like anyone else" [as pertains to usucaption]; *b.B.B.* 52a: "'A father has no *ha-zaqah* in the property of his son nor a son in the property of his father.' R. Joseph said: This applies even if they have parted. Raba, however, said that if they have shared [or: parted] the rule no longer applies ... The law is that where they have shared (the rule of the Mishnah) no longer applies. It has also been taught to the same effect: A son who has left his father's roof and a wife who has been divorced are on the same footing as strangers [in regard to the father or husband]."

Dion son of Herakleios, anticipating his death, states ἐὰν δέ τι ἂν[θ]ρώπι[νον πάσχω,] τὰ μὲν ὑπάρχοντα ἃ ἔχουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ μου ἔχέτω[σαν, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ καταλιμπάνω εἰς ταφὴν ἐμαυτοῦ, “if I should die, the property that my sons and wife (already) have is to remain with them, and the remainder I leave for my burial” (ll. 17-19). In other words, the will confirms a *prior* deed of gift. There is no indication that Dion had divided his property in order to obviate later claims by his sons and wife on the estate, and hence this is perhaps not an instance of dismission. But the will suggests that they could expect nothing more, perhaps because the majority of the estate had already been divided. No conditions of maintenance are attached to the will, although it does independently promise manumission to a female slave and her son (evidently fathered by Dion), on the condition that they “remain with me as long as I am alive, being obedient” (ll. 21-22: παραμείνω[σιν ἕως ἂν ἐγὼ ζῶ ὑπήκοοι ὄντες).⁵¹ Hence, the document appears to differentiate between the property unconditionally and fully transferred to Dion’s sons and wife, and the manumission of the two house-slaves that would become effective only at Dion’s death and which is conditional on their continued faithfulness.

From about a century later, *P.Cair.Goodsp.* 6 (129 BCE) records an acknowledgement (*homologia*) of Horus son of Imothes that he divided his property, giving a one-quarter share to his son Petosiris.⁵² Kreller observes, “the fact that a fractional part of the father’s possession is transferred suggests that this is a dismission.”⁵³ No other bequests are mentioned nor are any conditions imposed on the son.

P.Lond. III 880 (113 BCE), dated to the month of Mecheir (March 15), is also a *homologia* recording a division of the property of Totoeous son of Pelaios among his two sons and two daughters. Nothing is said of the testator retaining control over the property, or

⁵¹ On *paramonē* clauses, see W.L. Westermann, “The Paramone as General Service Contract,” *JJP* 2 (1948), pp. 9-50; A.E. Samuel, “The Role of Paramone Clauses in Ancient Documents,” *JJP* 15 (1965), pp. 221-231.

⁵² *P.Cair.Goodsp.* 6.2-6: ὁμολογία ἦν ἐκὼν κ[α]ὶ συνχωρήσας ἔθετο Ὀρος Ἰμούθου Πέρσης τῶν Βοήθου ὡς (ἐτῶν) πε [c ?] μέσος μελίχρως ὅτα c ?] καὶ ἀφεστηκότα καθ’ ἣν ὁμολογεῖ παρακεχωρηκέναι Πετοσίρει Ὀρου τῷ ἑαυτοῦ υἱῷ] μέσωι μελίχρωτι τετανῶι μακροπροσώποι εὐθύριν(ι) οὐλὴ καρπῶι δεξιῶι ἀπὸ τῆς [ὑπαρχούσης αὐτῷ] ἐν τῷ ἀπὸ νότου πεδίῳι Κροκοδίων πόλεως ἀπὸ (ἀρουρῶν) 16 ἡ ὅσου ἐάν ἡ τὸ (τέταρτον) μέρος ὃ ἐστὶν [ἄρουραι 4, γείτονες][δλ]ῆς τῆς γῆ[ς] ν[ό]του γῆ Ἐριενούφιου τοῦ Πόρτιτος καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν: βορρᾶ γῆ [c ?].

⁵³ Kreller, *Erbrechliche Untersuchungen*, p. 208.

that it would transfer only at his death. Indeed, the deed of gift ends with a threat directed against anyone who attempts to infringe on the division that was made. That the donees were in actual possession of the property, including for the two daughters a half-share in a two-story house, is indicated by the fact that *P.Lond.* III 1204, written in Choaik (December 26) only ten months later (in 113 BCE) records the sale of the house by the daughters. The deed of sale is framed in an ordinary manner, with the women effecting the sale with the help of a kinsman acting as a guardian. The father evidently retained some interest in the property, or at least it was thought necessary to state in the sale that he also consented to the sale (ll. 17-18: συνεπικελεύοτος Τοτοῦτος τοῦ Πελαίου καὶ συνπωλουμένου τοῦ ἑαυτῶν πατρός). Nevertheless, we have here an instance of the object of a deed of gift being liquidated within a few months of it passing into the control of the donees.⁵⁴

There are other divisions of property closer to the first century CE. *BGU* IV 1013 from the time of Claudius or Nero records a mother's declaration (*homologia*) dividing her property, a two storey house and its courtyard, between two daughters and perhaps one other person. The deed makes the division effective ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνεστώσης ἡμέρας, "from the present time" (l. 7). It requires that the donees provide their mother with a supply of food, oil (?) and money for clothing. But it also disallows anyone from alienating the property or altering the terms of the deed (ll. 19-21).

A receipt from the first century CE give further evidence of the practice of division of property prior to death. *P.Fay.* 97 (79 CE) is a receipt for 20 drachmae, paid by the eighteen year old Onnophrios, to Maron his forty year old brother as a provision of the settlement of an estate. A division of the property had been made while the father was still alive (ll. 16-17: κατὰ μερίτειάν ἦν [ἐνε]με | ἡμῖν περιών). As Kreller observes, the sum of 20 drachmae is too small to represent the full amount of the legacy, which normally would also have involved real estate. Thus the sum probably represents an equalization

⁵⁴ *P.Oxy.* II 243 (Oxyrhynchus, 79 CE) offers an example of the property of a testator being mortgaged by the donee, although the time-frame is very different. In 64 CE Zenarion divided her property with her son, while still alive (ὁπότε περιῆν), registering the transfer at the archive of Oxyrhynchus, and thirteen years later, her son Dionysios obtained a mortgage on the property in which he refers to the original transfer.

payment to adjust for anomalies.⁵⁵ The actual terms of the division are not stated, but the document concludes with the stipulation that Maron or his agents are not permitted to sue Onnophrios or to otherwise challenge the division of property. The father by this time had died—how long before is not stated—but since Onnophrios is making the payment one might suggest that Maron had already taken his share of the property at the time of the division and that Onnophrios was living with his father up to the time of his death. While the formal division had already occurred, only a minor adjustment was required to fully equalize the brothers' shares. Thus we have the opposite of the situation of the parable of the Returning Son, since in *P.Fay.* 97 it was the younger, not the elder brother, who remained at home and was thus charged with managing the final disposition of the parental estate.

As a final example of a transfer of property within the lifetime of the testator and unrestricted control given to the donee,⁵⁶ one can cite *P.Oxy.* II 273 from 95 CE, a *homologia* ceding 5 arourae of land owned by Julia Heracla to her daughter Gaia, also called Sarapias. Gaia was the minor daughter of Pausanias, also called Dionysios, son of Astyanax, presumably Julia's husband, and probably deceased. The deed of gift is explicit on the fact that the transfer of property is ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον (l. 14), and an unalterable gift (ll. 14-15: κατὰ χάριν | ἀναφαίρετον). Most tellingly of all, the deed expressly gives Gaia the right of disposal (ll. 19-24):⁵⁷

ἐξέσ[ται]
τῇ Γαίᾳ τῇ καὶ Σαραπιᾷ ἀπὸ τῆσδε [τῆς ὁμο-]
λογίας δι' ἐαυτῆς μετεπιγράφεσθαι [διὰ τῶν]
[κ]αταλοχισμῶν, μὴ προσδεηθεῖ[σιν τῆς]

⁵⁵ Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen*, pp. 209-210.

⁵⁶ For later examples, see Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen*, pp. 211-215.

⁵⁷ There are of course other deeds of gift in which the testator retained full control over the property and was expressly entitled to sell, mortgage or alienate the property, or to alter the terms of the will in favour of some other beneficiary. E.g., *SB V* 7559.13-15 (Tebytnis, 118 CE) ἐφ' ὃν δὲ χρόνον | περιεσθιν ἡ Θαισᾶς, ἔχειν αὐτὴν τὴν κατὰ τοῦ[τοῦ] ἐξουσίαν οἰκονομεῖν | περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὡς ἂν αἰρήται, "for as long as this Thaisas [the testator] is alive she shall have the authority over this, to manage it, in whatever way she chooses"; *BGU I* 186 (Soknopaiou Nesos, Arsinoite nome, 155 CE): ὃν δὲ χρόνον πε[ριτῇ][ὁ ὁμολογῶν, ἔχειν αὐτὸν τὴν κατὰ] τῶν ἰδίων πάν[των] ὁλοσχερῇ ἐξουσίαν πωλεῖν, ὑποτίθεσθαι, | ἑτέροις παρασ[υ]νχωρεῖν, "for as long as the acknowledging party is alive, he is to have the complete right over all his possessions, to sell, mortgage, or to transfer them to others."

τῆς μητρὸς Ἰουλίας Ἡρακλᾶς συ[νεπιγρα-]
φῆς

Gaia, also called Sarapias, shall from the date of this agreement be permitted by herself to convey (by sale) through the official registers, without her mother Julia Heracla consenting to the conveyance.

The likely occasion of the deed of gift is a forthcoming marriage between Gaia and Theon, to whom Julia makes the *homologia*, and it is this situation that perhaps accounts for the full transfer of ownership from Julia to Gaia and the lack of any provision for Julia's support from the property. The instigation of this division of property, one may surmise, may have come from Gaia, her prospective husband, or from Julia.

Several observations can be made from these documents, ranging from the third century BCE to the first century of the Common Era. First, none of them is called a διαθήκη and none uses the terminology, καταλείπειν, normally found in wills.⁵⁸ Instead, all are framed as objective *homologia* (sometimes with a subjective *homologia* in the list of witnesses at the end), acknowledging a division of property. BGU III 993 is expressly called a δόσις, which corresponds to the Mishnaic נזנה.

Second, whether or not the deed of gift contains the phrase μετὰ τὴν ἑαυτῆς τελευτήν, it seems clear that in most cases the property effectively transferred at the time of the gift. In the papyrus deeds of gift there is no reason to suppose that the testator continued to enjoy usufruct, for even in those cases where a maintenance clause exists, it is stated in absolute value rather than, as in the Mishnaic rulings, in terms of usufruct.

Third, with deeds of gift it is not necessary to suppose that a gift to one son or daughter would automatically imply that the entire parental estate was divided. In the case of BGU III 993 the testator's possessions were unevenly divided between his daughter and wife, and it remains unclear whether his sons were excluded entirely, whether they had already received property through dismission (which seems

⁵⁸ *P.Petr.* III 2 is a will, but the clause of interest for us is the reference to the *prior* gift to the wife and sons of the testator. For a typical will, see, e.g., *P.Oxy.* III 490.3-4 (124 CE): ἐφ' ὃν μέ[ν περίειμι] χρόνον ἔχειν με τὴν κατὰ [τῶν ἰδίων ἐξουσίαν ὃ ἐὰν βούλωμαι ἐπιτελεῖν καὶ μεταδιατίθεσθαι καὶ πρὸς ἀκύρωσιν] | ἄγειν τήνδε τὴν διαθήκην. ἐὰν δὲ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τελευτήσω καταλ[εῖπω κατὰ] φιλοστοργίαν Διονυσίῳ Πανε[χότῳ ἀπελευθέρῳ Πετοσίριος c 13 μητρὸς Ἀμμωνοῦτος ...

unlikely), or whether they had to await the mother's decease. In *P.Cair.Goodsp.* 6, since only one-quarter of the testator's estate went to his son Horus, it would seem that the rest remained with the testator, either to be disbursed to others or to later to Horus. And in the case of *P.Oxy.* II 273, the gift of some of Julia's property to her daughter Gaia certainly does not imply that all of Julia's property was apportioned to other potential heirs. Hence, the situation of the parable of the Returning Son is quite plausible: the younger son obtains a deed of gift, but this does not oblige the father formally to divide his property with the elder son, although the elder son can validly expect that he receive the remainder of the property eventually.

Fourth, there is no indication at all that opprobrium attached to the transfer. In the case of *BGU* III 993 the division was likely a device to protect the interest of the daughter and wife. If anyone were to be insulted, it would be the sons, if they had been left aside as a result of the deed of gift. *P.Oxy.* II 273 is likely connected with a marriage of the daughter of the testatrix; and in *P.Lond.* III 880 the later involvement and agreement of the testator in the sale of the property is hardly an indication that he was insulted by the division. Is it possible that the division described in *P.Cair.Goodsp.* 6 was a dismissal, although the evidence is rather thin; and in the case of *P.Fay.* 97 one might speculate that there was some tension between the two brothers, and *perhaps* between the testator and the elder brother, but there is no real evidence up which to build such a theory.

In all, there is nothing in these deeds of gift to indicate that the division of parental property prior to the death of the testator was either unusual or necessarily constituted an insult to the parent. Except for *P.Fay.* 97, these deeds do not even contain clauses to indicate that the legatee was thereby excluded from any further claims on the estate. Hence, there seems to be no good reason to suppose, with Bailey and Hultgren, that the younger son's demand constituted an insult to the father's honour, still less that it was tantamount to wishing the father dead. Divisions *inter vivos* were common enough, and motivated by a variety of reasons—marriage, protection of a spouse or heir, and perhaps a simple desire on the part of the donee to establish an independent household or the testator's desire to have this happen. As indicated above, we are seldom in a position to know *who* initiated the division, because agency is hidden

behind the *homologia* formula. But this merely indicates that as the owner, the father or mother had to authorize the legal transfer. It tells us nothing about the other agents involved.

As to the younger son's alleged failure to maintain the father from his gift-property, the papyri do not offer much support. Of course some divisions are clear that maintenance is a stipulation of the division, but in the case of *P.Mich.* V 321, maintenance is imposed on only one of the donees. In other cases, there is no maintenance provision at all. Had the parable wished to make the point that the younger son's "sin" was a failure to maintain, there would have had to be a statement to this effect, or one would have to suppose that *all* Palestinian deeds of gift required maintenance. It is at this point that *Sir.* 33:20-23 and *t.B.B.* 8:10 become relevant, for these suggest that at least some deeds of gift lack this provision entirely. Hence the lament in *b.B.Mes.* 75b. Moreover, there is nothing in the parable to suggest that the father was in any way disadvantaged by the liquidation of the younger son's property; on the contrary, he is still able to mount a substantial feast on the son's return.

3. *The Younger Son*

What then is the younger son's sin? The description of the son's activities in 15:13, διεσκόπισεν τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ ζῶν ἀσώτως, as well as the elder brother's characterization of him as ὁ καταφαγών σου τὸν βίον μετὰ πορνῶν in 15:30 both focus on the loss of family property and uses the key concept of ἀσωτία, prodigality. Aristotle notes that ἀσωτία is often thought to be a combination of vices, since "we call prodigal those who lack restraint (τοὺς ἀκρατεῖς) and who spend their money on debauchery (ἀκολασία)," both characteristics that might apply to the younger son. But prodigality for Aristotle has to do particularly with wasting one's substance:

Really it denotes the possessor of one particular vice, that of wasting one's substance (τὸ φθείρειν τὴν οὐσίαν); for he who is ruined by his own agency is a hopeless case indeed, and to waste one's substance (ἢ τῆς οὐσίας φθορά) seems to be in a way to ruin oneself, inasmuch as wealth is the means of life. (Aristotle, *EN* IV 1.1119b)

In Menander's *Skipper*, the focus is not on what the prodigal does to himself, but the punishment that ought to be meted out to those who "squander their inheritance" (τοὺς τὰ πατρώα κατεδηδοκότας):

ὦ φιλάττη Γῆ μητέρα ὡς σεμνὸν σφοδρ' εἶ
τοῖς νοῦν ἔχουσι κτῆμα πολλοῦ τ' ἄξιον
ὡς δῆτ' ἔχρην εἰ τις πατρώαν παραλαβὼν
γῆν καταφάγοι, πλεῖν τοῦτον ἤδη διὰ τέλους
καὶ μηδ' ἐπιβαίνειν γῆς, ἴν' οὕτως ἦσθετο
οἶον παραλαβὼν ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἐφείσατο

O beloved mother Earth, how very holy a possession
are you to those who are sensible, and much beyond price;
so it would be only right that whoever receives his ancestral estate
and devoured it, should from that time and forever
sail the seas never setting foot on land, that he might thus know
the good thing he received but did not spare. (Athenaeus, *Deipn.* IV
144B-C)

In both Aristotle and Menander it is not the duty to support one's parents that is in focus with prodigality, although that might be an associated vice. It is the sheer act of wasting one's substance and the thoughtlessness entailed. The citation from Menander makes clear that this might be conceived as an offence against the gods; indeed the punishment proposed is consistent with this understanding.

In Israelite culture, where the land was conceived as "the land your God is giving you" and as something whose sanctity should be protected, prodigality might easily be treated as an offence against God, as it also damaged the collective standing of the family but reducing its wealth and therefore its influence and honour.

We have at least two papyrus examples of prodigals, with which I shall close. The first, *BGU* III 993, is a letter from a prodigal, begging reconciliation with his mother, apparently having expended his resources. Noteworthy is his confession of sin (οἶδα ὅτι ἡμάρτηκα) and assurance that he has reformed (πεπαίδευμαι καθ' ὃν δὴ τρόπον), and the hyperbolic and rather stereotypical claim to be naked.⁵⁹ The second, *P.Flor.* I 99, is a letter of the parents of an unreformed prodigal to the *strategos*, accusing him expressly of prodigality (ἄσω-

⁵⁹ See *P.Enteux.* 74.7 (222 BCE); *P.Mich.* I 90.2 (III BCE); *P.Oxy.* IV 439.6 (I CE); XVII 2151.10 (III CE); *P.Strass.* IV 233.3 (III BCE).

τευόμενος), and asking that their denunciation of him be registered as a means of protecting them from their son's creditors.

Neither of these letter concern deeds of gift, although one can easily imagine that both prodigals acquired their initial capital in this manner. The conclusion of this paper is that papyrus deeds of gift can indeed illumine the situation presupposed in Luke 15:12: there is no reason to suppose that the son's request for a division of the property prior to his father's death was especially unusual, or that it constituted an insult or death-wish. This unwarranted conclusion seems more designed to inflate the crime of the younger son, to take it well beyond the boundary of quotidian happenings, and thus to install the son as a foil for a theologized father. Nor is the fourth commandment necessarily invoked here: neither contemporary deeds of gift nor the assumptions of the parable itself authorize the conclusion that the son was legally obliged to support his father or that his father's financial standing was damaged by the division. Instead, we have a reasonably typical story of a deed of gift, to be sure, a deed of gift that went disastrously, but hardly unpredictably, wrong.

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DIE EUCHARISTISCHEN GEBETE VON DIDACHE 9 UND 10 UND DAS RÄTSEL VON DIDACHE 10:6

Dietrich-Alex Koch

Seitdem 1883 erstmalig der Text der sog. *Didache*, der "Lehre der zwölf Apostel," veröffentlicht wurde,¹ hat diese interessante Schrift vielfältige Aufmerksamkeit gefunden.² Sie stellt das früheste liturgische Handbuch des Urchristentums dar (vor allem zu den Themen Taufe und Eucharistie),³ umfaßt aber auch einige Abschnitte, in denen wichtige Fragen der Gemeindeordnung behandelt werden (Aufnahme und Umgang mit Wanderaposteln und Wanderpropheten, Wahl von Bischöfen und Diakonen u.a.).⁴ Abgeschlossen wird die Schrift durch einen eschatologischen Ausblick.⁵ Die *Didache*, die allgemein um 100 n. Chr. datiert wird, ist seit ihrer Entdeckung eine

¹ Vgl. K. Niederwimmer, *Die Didache*, Göttingen 1989, pp. 33-36. Mit diesem Beitrag setzte ich den Dialog mit dem Jubilar fort, der auf einer Tagung vom 4.-6. Januar 1999 in Soesterberg, getragen von der Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion (NOSTER) begann. Ich hatte damals die Ehre, auf den Beitrag von Henk Jan de Jonge zum Thema der Entstehung des Abendmahls die "Response" zu liefern. Beide Beiträge sind veröffentlicht in: J.W. van Henten/A. Houtepen (Hg.), *Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition*, Assen 2001; dort: H.J. de Jonge, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper," pp. 209-237 und D.-A. Koch, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper: Response to Henk Jan de Jonge," pp. 238-252. Die Wichtigkeit des Themas für den Jubilar kommt zudem darin zum Ausdruck, daß er diesem Gegenstand auch seine Abschiedsvorlesung am 13. April 2007 widmete: *Avondmaal en symposium. Oorsprong en eerste ontwikkeling van de vroegchristelijke samenkomst*, Leiden 2007. Eine frühere Fassung dieses Beitrags habe ich am 21. Dezember 2006 im Neutestamentlichen Doktoranden- und Habilitandenkolloquium der Evangelisch-Theologischen Fakultät Münster vorgetragen, eine englische Fassung am 19. November 2007 in der Arbeitsgruppe "Didache in Context" der SBL-Tagung in San Diego. Allen Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmern sage ich Dank für anregende und weiterführende Diskussionen.

² Zur Forschungsgeschichte vgl. Ph. Vielhauer, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur*, Berlin 1975, pp. 719-737; J.A. Draper, "The Didache in Modern Research: An Overview," in: *id.* (ed.), *The Didache in Modern Research*, Leiden 1996, pp. 1-41; H. van de Sandt/D. Flusser (eds), *The Didache. Its Jewish Sources and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*, Assen/Minneapolis 2002.

³ *Didache* 7-10; durch 7:1 (ταῦτα πάντα προεπρόντες) wird die in 1:1-6:3 aufgenommene Zwei-Wege-Lehre zum Teil der Taufliturgie.

⁴ *Didache* 11-15; der uneinheitlich wirkende Aufbau ist ein deutlicher Hinweis, daß hier Anweisungen unterschiedlichen Alters vorliegen; vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, pp. 209-211.

⁵ *Didache* 16; zu den traditionsgeschichtlichen Problemen vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, pp. 247-256.

hochwillkommene Quelle, um über die bisher bekannten Texte des Neuen Testaments und der sog. Apostolischen Väter hinaus Kenntnis über Liturgie und Gemeindeleben der Urchristenheit zu gewinnen. Dies gilt unverändert bis heute, und zwar insbesondere auch für die beiden "eucharistischen" Kapitel 9 und 10, bekommt man doch hier erstmalig Zugang zu den Gebeten, die—zumindest in einem Teil der frühchristlichen Gemeinden—an der Wende vom 1. zum 2. Jh. n. Chr. im rituellen Gemeindemahl verwendet wurden. Das zusätzliche Material, das damit für die Frühgeschichte des urchristlichen Mahlsakraments zur Verfügung stand, führte aber zugleich zu einer ganzen Anzahl höchst strittiger Fragen, die bis heute in der Forschung kontrovers diskutiert werden. So ist bis heute der genaue Charakter des ohne Zweifel rituellen Mahls, zu dem die in *Didache* 9 und 10 überlieferten Gebete gehörten, strittig. Genauso ungelöst ist die Frage, wie sich das in *Didache* 9 und 10 vorausgesetzte Mahl zum κυριακὸν δεῖπνον verhält, das sich aus 1 Korinther 10 und 11 für den paulinischen Traditionsbereich erheben läßt. Da nun faktisch 1 Korinther 10 und 11 sowie *Didache* 9-10 die beiden ältesten Texte sind, die sich auf das urchristliche Mahlsakrament beziehen, sind beide Fragen aufs engste miteinander verbunden.

Zunächst ist kurz der Textbefund in *Didache* 9-10 zu skizzieren:⁶ Auf die Einführung περὶ δὲ τῆς εὐχαριστίας, οὕτως εὐχαριστήσατε folgt in 9:2 der Text eines Gebets in Bezug auf den Kelch, sodann in 9:3-4 ein Gebet über das Brot. In 10:1-5 schließt sich ein Gebet an, das dankend Bezug nimmt auf πνευματικὴ τροφή καὶ ποτόν. Da dieses Schlußgebet mit der Wendung μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐμπλησθῆναι οὕτως εὐχαριστήσατε eingeleitet wird, ist es offensichtlich, daß zwischen den Gebeten von *Didache* 9 und *Didache* 10 eine Mahlzeit stattgefunden hat, so daß die Gebete von *Didache* 9 zu Beginn des Mahls, also unmittelbar vor dem Verzehr dieser Mahlelemente gesprochen wurden. Zusätzlich enthalten sind in *Didache* 9-10: (a) zwei liturgische Anweisungen (in 9:5 über den Ausschluß der Ungetauften, in 10:7 über die Rechte der Propheten im Ablauf der Liturgie) und (b) in 10:6 mehrere kurze Gebetsrufe.

⁶ Zur Analyse allgemein vgl. die Kommentare von Niederwimmer, *Didache*, pp. 173-209, und W. Rordorf/A. Tuilier, *La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres*, Paris 1978, pp. 38-50; die kurze Einführung in die Problematik bei G. Schöllgen, "Didache. Zwölf-Apostel-Lehre," in: *id.*, *Didache. Zwölf-Apostel-Lehre*, Freiburg 1991, pp. 50-54 und jüngst J. Schröter, *Das Abendmahl. Frühchristliche Deutungen und Impulse für die Gegenwart*, Stuttgart 2006, pp. 60-72.

Diese Struktur hat zu einer umfangreichen Forschungsdiskussion geführt, insbesondere veranlaßt durch das als auffällig empfundene Fehlen der Einsetzungsworte von 1 Kor. 11:23-25 in der *Didache*.⁷ Trotz erheblicher Verzweigungen in den zur Debatte gestellten Hypothesen läßt sich für die Forschungsdiskussion eine grundlegende Alternative benennen, die dann für die gesamte weitere Analyse bestimmend ist:⁸

(1) Gemäß der ersten Hypothese bestand das in den Gemeinden der *Didache* gefeierte rituelle Mahl aus zwei Teilen: einem Gemeinschaftsmahl, auf das sich die in *Didache* 9-10 vorliegenden Gebete beziehen, das häufig auch als "Agape" bezeichnet wird, und einem zweiten, im eigentlichen Sinne sakramentalen Teil, in dem dann die hier fehlenden Einsetzungsworte ihren Platz hatten—wobei allerdings dieser zweite Teil im Text der *Didache* keinerlei Niederschlag gefunden hat. Der Grund für diese Hypothese ist offensichtlich: Die Einsetzungsworte gelten, weitgehend undiskutiert, als integraler Bestandteil der urchristlichen rituellen Mahlfeier, so daß—gemäß dieser Sicht—sie zweifelsfrei ergänzt werden müssen. Aber über dieses hypothetische Argument hinaus können die Vertreter dieser Position auch auf einen bestimmten Sachverhalt im vorhandenen Text von *Didache* 10 hinweisen. In *Didache* 10:6-7 folgen auf das Schlußgebet (a) mehrere Gebetsrufe (so ὡσαννὰ τῷ θεῷ Δαυίδ und παραναθᾶ in V. 6b, d) sowie (b) eine agendarische Anweisung (über die Rechte der Propheten im liturgischen Ablauf; 10:7), und in diesem Zusammenhang findet sich auch die Wendung εἴ τις ἅγιός ἐστιν, ἐρχέσθω· εἴ τις οὐκ ἔστι, μετανοεῖτω (V. 6c: "wenn jemand heilig ist, komme er, wenn er es nicht ist, tue er Buße"). Dies ist offensichtlich eine Aufforderung an die Teilnehmer des rituellen Mahls, die sich auf einen noch ausstehenden Teil der Mahlfeier bezieht. Niederwimmer stellt ausdrücklich fest: "Läßt man den überlieferten Text, wie er ist, so bleibt kaum eine andere Wahl, als anzunehmen, daß 10,6 die Invitation zum Herrenmahl darstellt, das unmittelbar darauf folgt."⁹

⁷ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 176: "Mehr noch frappiert, daß die Einsetzungsworte fehlen."

⁸ Vgl. die Übersicht bei Niederwimmer, *Didache*, pp. 176-179.

⁹ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 179; der Beginn der Formulierung Niederwimmers spielt darauf an, daß Hans Lietzmann, 10:6c als fehl am Platze empfand und vor 9:5 einordnete; vgl. H. Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, Bonn 1926, pp. 236-237. Auch Schöllgen, "Didache," p. 54 sieht in 10:6c einen klaren Hinweis auf die Fortsetzung des Mahlrituals.

Das Problem dieser Deutung¹⁰ besteht darin, daß der Wortlaut der Gebete und auch deren Einleitung keinen Anlaß dazu geben, mit einem weiteren Teil der Mahlfeier zu rechnen und das zwischen *Didache* 9 und 10 erfolgte Mahl als vorläufig, unrituell oder unsakramental anzusehen. Die dezidierte Bezeichnung des Mahls als εὐχαριστία (zumal in der ungewöhnlichen Wendung von 9:5: "Niemand aber soll von eurer 'Eucharistia' essen und auch nicht trinken als die...") und der Rückbezug auf die Mahlelemente als "geistliche Speise und geistlicher Trank" (10:3) lassen eine derartige Interpretation nicht zu. Hinzu kommt, daß es völlig unerklärlich bleibt, warum in diesem liturgischen Text ein einleitender Teil des Mahlrituals ausführlich Erwähnung findet, der zentrale Teil dagegen völlig fehlen soll.¹¹

(2) Die Gegenthese sieht in den Gebeten von *Didache* 9-10 vollständige eucharistische Texte, die sich auf eine in sich vollständige und abgeschlossene rituelle Mahlfeier beziehen,¹² wobei dann häufig die Eigenständigkeit dieses Typs der Mahlfeier gegenüber dem paulinischen κυριακὸν δεῖπνον hervorgehoben wird. Dies ergibt eine in

¹⁰ Sie wurde von prominenten Forschern vertreten, so u.a. Th. Zahn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur* 3: *Supplementum Clementinum*, Erlangen 1884 (darin: Die "Lehre der zwölf Apostel," pp. 278-319); M. Dibelius, "Die Mahl-Gebete der Didache," in: *id.*, *Botschaft und Geschichte, Ges. Aufs. 2. Zum Urchristentum und zu hellenistischen Religionsgeschichte*, hg. v. H. Kraft/G. Bornkamm, Tübingen 1956, pp. 117-127 (zuerst ZNW 37 [1938], pp. 47-58); R. Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, Tübingen 1961, p. 153; J. Jeremias, *Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu*, Göttingen 1967, pp. 111, 126-127. Diese Deutung wird gegenwärtig vertreten von Niederwimmer, *Didache*, pp. 179-180; Schöllgen, "Didache," pp. 50-54 und hat sich nach Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 177 "weithin durchgesetzt."

¹¹ Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 180 sieht daher hierin die entscheidende Schwäche dieser auch von ihm selbst vertretenen Position. Die dafür vorgetragenen Erklärungen (Bultmann, *Theologie*, p. 153: die Liturgie der eigentlichen Feier brauchte "als allbekannt nicht mitgeteilt zu werden"; Jeremias, *Abendmahlsworte*, pp. 126-127: die eigentliche Liturgie sollte vor Profanierung geschützt werden) überzeugen in der Tat nicht.

¹² Sie wurde ebenfalls von prominenten Forschern vertreten, so u.a. von A. Harnack, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel nebst Untersuchungen zur ältesten Geschichte der Kirchenverfassung und des Kirchenrechts*, Leipzig 1893, pp. 28-37; Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, pp. 232-233 (der in *Didache* 9 eine echte "Eucharistie" sieht, auf das eine Agape folgt, auf welche *Did.* 10:1-5 zurückblickt); A. Vööbus, *Liturgical Traditions in the Didache*, Stockholm 1968, pp. 63-70 ("there is no other way left... but to understand these prayers as eucharistic" [70]). Dabei wird der Charakter des Mahls durchaus unterschiedlich beurteilt (als reine Agape oder als "Eucharistie"), doch braucht das an dieser Stelle nicht näher diskutiert zu werden.

sich stimmige Interpretation,¹³ doch bleibt ein Hindernis bestehen: die liturgische Aufforderung von 10:6c, die auf einen weiteren, noch ausstehenden Teil der Liturgie verweist. Diese muß dann als Dublette zu der Ausschlußformulierung von 9:5 erklärt werden,¹⁴ was schon aufgrund der Stellung nach (!) dem Abschlußgebet wenig überzeugend ist.

Aufgrund dieser Diskussionslage sind zwei Problembereiche zu diskutieren: (a) die Funktion der sog. Einsetzungsworte im Blick auf die Liturgie der frühchristlichen Mahlfeier, und (b) die Funktion von *Did.* 10:6 im Rahmen des dort vorausgesetzten Mahlverlaufs.

1. 1 Kor. 10:1-22; 11:17-34 und *Didache* 9-10

Die Aussagen des Paulus in 1 Kor. 10:1-22 und 11:17-34 vermitteln nur sehr begrenzte Aufschlüsse über den Ablauf der Mahlfeier, die er betont *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον* (1 Kor. 11:20) nennt. Der Grund ist offensichtlich. In beiden Fällen geht es nicht um eine grundsätzliche Regelung bzw. Neuregelung des Ablaufs. Die Regelung des Ablaufs ist längst erfolgt, nämlich in der Gründungsphase der Gemeinde durch Paulus selbst. In 1 Kor. 11:17-22 geht es um Mißstände, die bei der Mahlfeier eingerissen sind, und im Zusammenhang der Kritik des Paulus erfahren wir, daß es sich dabei einerseits um ein rituelles Mahl handelt, das offenbar in einer bestimmten Beziehung zu demjenigen Mahl steht, das der κύριος "in der Nacht, in der er ausgeliefert wurde," mit den Seinen feierte (11:23); andererseits ist klar erkennbar, daß dieses Mahl zugleich ein echtes Sättigungsmahl war,

¹³ Gegen Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 177 (s.o. A 11) ist festzuhalten, daß diese Sicht auch in der gegenwärtigen Diskussion durchaus häufig vertreten wird, vgl. M. Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgemeinschaft. Soziologie und Liturgie frühchristlicher Mahlfeiern*, Tübingen 1996, pp. 379-405; J.A. Draper, "Ritual Process and Ritual Symbol in *Didache* 7-10," *VigChr* 54 (2000), pp. 121-154 (bes. pp. 142-143) und Van de Sandt/Flusser (eds), *Didache*, pp. 298-304. Ebenso jüngst Schröter, *Abendmahl*, pp. 68-69 und M. Theobald, "Leib und Blut Christi. Erwägungen zur Herkunft, Funktion und Bedeutung des sogenannten 'Einsetzungsberichts'," in: M. Ebner (ed.), *Herrenmahl und Gruppenidentität*, Freiburg 2007, pp. 121-165, dort pp. 142-152. Auch für De Jonge, "History," ist in *Didache* 9-10 ein sakramentales Mahl vorausgesetzt (p. 222: "The supper pictured by the *Didache* is both a real and a sacramental meal"), auf das vermutlich noch eine allgemeine Gemeindeversammlung mit "prophecies, instruction, admonitions, reprimands, ecstatic utterances etc." (aber eben nicht: mit dem eigentlichen Mahlsakrament) folgte.

¹⁴ So Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl*, p. 405; Draper, "Ritual Process," p. 134.

bei dem—und das ist der Mißstand—die einen am Ende betrunken waren, andere aber leer ausgingen und hungrig blieben (11:21). Die Zitation der Einsetzungsworte ist für Paulus ganz offensichtlich aus inhaltlichen Gründen wichtig, und zwar im Blick auf die Schlußfolgerungen, die er daraus in 11:27-34 zieht. Aber es wird nirgends erkennbar, daß diese Worte im Mahlverlauf selbst rezitiert wurden. Der einzige Hinweis auf liturgisch zu bewertende Äußerungen im Mahlverlauf steht in 11:26, wo Paulus, an den zweiten Wiederholungsbefehl anknüpfend, zu den Einsetzungsworten hinzufügt—und zwar in direkter Anrede an die Adressaten: ὁσάκις γὰρ ἐὰν ἐσθίητε τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον καὶ τὸν ποτήριον πίνητε, τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου καταγγέλλετε, ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ, “Sooft ihr nämlich dieses Brot eßt und diesen Becher trinkt, verkündet ihr den Tod des Herrn, bis daß er kommt.” Mit dem “Verkündigen” des “Todes des Herrn” kann natürlich nicht der reine Mahlvorgang als solcher gemeint sein, sondern es muß eine bestimmte verbale Interpretation hinzutreten, durch die dieses Mahl als ganzes in den Horizont des Todes Jesu gestellt wird. Worum es sich dabei handelte, ist 1 Kor. 10:16 zu entnehmen.

In 1 Kor. 10:14-22 will Paulus im Zusammenhang der Debatte über das Problem des sog. Götzenopferfleisches zweierlei erreichen: Er will einerseits eine ganz klare Grenzlinie ziehen zu jeder Form von εἰδωλολατρία, also der kultischen Verehrung heidnischer Gottheiten (10:14).¹⁵ Zugleich will er zeigen, daß es nicht auf die Substanzen (z.B. des Götzenopferfleisches) ankommt, sondern auf die κοινωνία, in die sich jemand begibt, in die Gemeinschaft mit den Dämonen oder die Gemeinschaft mit dem “Herrn,” die eine gleichzeitige Gemeinschaft mit den Dämonen zwingend ausschließt (10:20b, 21). In diesem Zusammenhang greift Paulus auf offenbar zentrale Aspekte des rituellen Gemeindemahls zurück, nämlich auf die κοινωνία mit dem Blut (bzw. dem Leib) Christi, die in diesem Mahl hergestellt wird: τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; “Der Becher des Lobgebets, über dem wir das Lobgebet sprechen, ist er nicht die Anteilhabe am Blut Christi?” (10:16).

Εὐλογία/εὐλογεῖν meint hier das “Lobgebet” bzw. “das Lobgebet sprechen”; εὐλογεῖν heißt (a) “loben, rühmen, preisen”—dies ist die

¹⁵ Diesem Ziel dient der ganze vorlaufende Abschnitt 10:1-13 mit dem warnenden Hinweis auf den Götzendienst der “Väter.”

grundsätzlich profangriechische Bedeutung von εὐλογεῖν; sie ist in der LXX vorausgesetzt, wenn dort יהוה ברוך mit εὐλογητός κύριος wiedergegeben wird (so Gen. 24:27 u.ä.), vgl. im NT Lk. 1:64 und die Wendung εὐλογητός ὁ θεός (2 Kor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Petr. 1:3). Da das jüdische Tischgebet als Lobspruch mit "Gelobt (εὐλογητός) sei Gott" als Beginn formuliert wird,¹⁶ kann absolutes εὐλογεῖν in diesem Traditionsbereich auch technisch im Sinne von "das Lobgebet (bei Tisch) sprechen" gebraucht werden,¹⁷ so Mk. 6:41 (par. Mt. 14:19); Mk. 14:22 (par. Mt. 26:26); Lk. 24:30;¹⁸ (b) aufgrund der festen Wiedergabe von ברוך durch εὐλογεῖν in der LXX partizipiert εὐλογεῖν in der LXX an der gesamten semantischen Breite von ברוך und erhält so auch die Bedeutung "segnen"—und zwar sowohl von Menschen (im Sinne von: Gottes gnadenreiche Kraft auf jemanden herabwünschen) als auch von Gott bzw. Christus selbst (im Sinne von: mit Wohltaten bedenken).¹⁹ Dieser Sprachgebrauch ist auch sonst frühjüdisch und frühchristlich belegt, vgl. Josephus, *Bell.* V 401 und Röm. 12:4. Keine ausreichenden Belege gibt es dagegen für einen Sprachgebrauch von εὐλογεῖν im Sinne von "weihen" (*consecrare*).²⁰ Εὐλογία meint dementsprechend (a) "Lob, Preis"; (b) den Segenswunsch bzw. das Segensgut.²¹

¹⁶ Vgl. die Textbeispiele bei Bill. 4.2, pp. 631-632.

¹⁷ H. Patsch, "εὐλογέω," *EWNT* 2 (1992), pp. 198-201, dort pp. 199-200.

¹⁸ Von hier aus sind auch die Fälle Lk. 9:16 (par. zu Mk. 6:41), wo Lk. αὐτούς hinzufügt, und Mk. 8:7 (εὐλογήσας αὐτά nach absolutem εὐχαριστήσας in 8:61) zu beurteilen: "Er sprach das Lobgebet in Bezug auf sie (die Brote bzw. Fische)."

¹⁹ Belege für diesen unstrittigen Sprachgebrauch s. Bauer/Aland, *Wb.*, p. 652, sv εὐλογέω 1.2a.3.

²⁰ Bauer/Aland, *Wb.*, p. 652, s.v. εὐλογέω 2b, postuliert eine Bedeutung "etw. segnen, weihen" und führt hierfür die Stellen Ex. 23:25; 1 Kön. 9:13 und Josephus, *Bell.* V 401 an. Doch ist zunächst zwischen "segnen" (*benedicere*) und "weihen" (*consecrare*) zu unterscheiden. Und daß es eine selbständige Verwendung von εὐλογεῖν im Sinne von καθιεροῦν (und von εὐλογία im Sinne von "Weihe," so Bauer/Aland, *Wb.*, p. 653, s.v. εὐλογία 4) gegeben habe, läßt sich nicht nachweisen. Ex. 23:25(LXX) ist zwar ausnahmsweise die Segenszusage auf Gegenstände bezogen, jedoch nicht im Sinne einer "Weihe": Gott will das Brot, den Wein und das Wasser Israels "segnen," (nicht "weihe") d.h. vermehren, wenn es den Weisungen Gottes folgt. In Josephus, *Bell.* V 401 ist im Blick auf die Handlungen der Priester von τὰ εὐλογηθέντα und τὰ καταρμένα die Rede, was eine Bedeutung im Sinne von "weihe" ausschließt. Einzig 1 Sam. 9:13 ist auch die Bedeutung "weihe" möglich: Dort heißt es von Samuel: εὐλογεῖ τὴν θυσίαν, doch hat sich von hier aus kein eigenständiger Sprachgebrauch entwickelt.

²¹ Belege s. Bauer/Aland, *Wb.*, p. 653, s.v. εὐλογία 1-3.5. Die Bedeutung "Weihe," die Bauer/Aland s.v. 4 für 1 Kor. 10:16 postuliert, ist ohne Grundlage: Als einzige Parallele ist *JosAs* 8:11 angeführt, doch steht dort die gleiche Wortverbindung wie in 1 Kor. 10:16: ποτήριον εὐλογίας σου. Neben ἄρτον ζωῆς, "Brot des Lebens" (d.h. Brot, das Leben vermittelt) kann man diese Wendung als "Becher deines Segens" verstehen, aber mit Sicherheit nicht als "Weihebecher." In 1 Kor. 10:16 zeigt jedoch der Zusatz ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, daß hier an das Lobgebet beim Mahl gedacht ist.

Die Verwendung von εὐλογία/εὐλογεῖν im Zusammenhang des rituellen Gemeindemahls ist somit kein Zufall, und auf der Basis der Gestaltung des jüdischen Tischgebets als Lobgebet ist für 1 Kor. 10:16 davon auszugehen, daß hier nicht die Mahlteilnehmer gesegnet werden, sondern Gott für die im Mahl vermittelten Gaben gepriesen wird, beginnend eben mit εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός. Auszuschließen ist dagegen, daß hier gemeint ist, daß der Becher selbst (oder gar sein Inhalt) "gesegnet" wird, was ja auf eine Konsekration von Gegenständen hinauslief.²²

Wenn Paulus sagt, daß der Becher, über dem im Mahlverlauf der Lobpreis Gottes gesprochen wird, Anteil am Tod des Herrn (seinem "Blut") vermittelt,²³ dann muß dies in diesem Gebet selbst klar zum Ausdruck gekommen sein, oder anders formuliert: Das Gebet über dem Becher (und das parallel dazu anzunehmende Gebet über dem Brot) hat den "Tod des Herrn" zum zentralen Inhalt. Dieses Gebet ist daher auch als der Ort in der Mahlfeier anzusehen, an dem, jedenfalls in paulinischen Gemeinden, der "Tod des Herrn" verkündigt wird.²⁴ Die Aussagen von 1 Kor. 11:26 über die Bedeutung des Mahls als Verkündigung des "Todes des Herrn" und die paulinische Interpretation des Lobgebets über dem Becher in 10:16 verweisen somit aufeinander.

Die Nähe von Lob- (bzw. Dank-)Gebet und Verkündigung zeigt sich auch in 1 Kor. 14:16: ἐπεὶ ἂν εὐλογῇς ἐν πνεύματι, ὁ ἀναπληρῶν τὸν τόπον τοῦ ἰδιώτου πῶς ἔρεῖ τὸ Ἀμήν ἐπὶ τῇ σῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ ἐπειδὴ τί λέγεις οὐκ οἶδεν. "Denn wenn du im Geist betest, wie kann der, der den Platz des Laien einnimmt, das Amen zu deiner Danksagung sprechen? Er versteht ja nicht, was du sagst." Diese Stelle zeigt nicht nur die große Nähe, die, jedenfalls für Paulus, zwischen εὐλογεῖν ([Gott] loben) und εὐχαριστεῖν ([Gott] danken) besteht, sondern macht auch deutlich, daß für Paulus die (Lob- und Dank-)Gebete in der Gemeinde, wenn sie denn der οἰκοδομῇ dienen, einen klar benennbaren Inhalt haben, dem andere,

²² Zutreffend W. Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther 2*, Düsseldorf/Neukirchen-Vluyn 1995, p. 436: "Es geht nicht um die segensbringende Wirkung oder überhaupt um den Inhalt des Bechers, sondern um Dank und Lobpreis, der darüber gesprochen wird."

²³ Zur Bedeutung von κοινωνία vgl. Schrage, *Korinther*, pp. 437-440.

²⁴ Damit erübrigt sich die fragwürdige Alternative, die in der älteren Forschung diskutiert wurde, nämlich ob das Herrenmahl "an sich" die Verkündigung des Todes des Herrn darstellt, oder ob im Mahlverlauf eine diesen begleitende eigenständige Wortverkündigung anzunehmen ist; vgl. die Diskussion bei H. Feld, *Das Verständnis des Abendmahls*, Darmstadt 1976, p. 62 und H. Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Göttingen² 1981, p. 246.

die dem Gebet zuhören, zustimmen können. Lob und Dank, im Gebet an Gott gerichtet, sind also zugleich Verkündigung für die übrigen Gemeindemitglieder.

Damit ergibt sich, daß die beiden Gebete über dem Brot und über dem Becher²⁵ die zentralen Elemente sind, durch die das gemeinschaftliche Mahl der Gemeinde zugleich zum rituellen Mahl wird, das so "Anteilhabe am Blut des Herrn" eröffnet.

Gleichzeitig zeigt sich eine grundsätzliche Übereinstimmung mit der Abfolge des Mahls von *Didache* 9-10: In beiden Fällen sind die mit Brot und Becher verbundenen Gebete die zentralen Elemente, die den rituellen Vorgang konstituieren und interpretieren.²⁶ Aufgrund der zentralen Rolle der Gebete wird sofort verständlich, warum dann in *Didache* 9 das Gemeindemahl εὐχαριστία/Dankgebet genannt werden konnte, obwohl es sich weiterhin um eine reale Mahlzeit handelte, bei der das Essen des Brotes und das Trinken aus dem Becher integrale Bestandteile des rituellen Vorgangs waren. Die Bedeutung der Gebete, durch die das Mahl erst zum rituellen Mahl wird, zeigt sich auch in der ungeschickten, aber bezeichnenden Formulierung vom "Essen und Trinken von eurer εὐχαριστία," wörtlich: das "Essen und Trinken von eurer Danksagung" (*Did.* 9:5).

Es ergibt sich somit eine grundsätzliche Übereinstimmung zwischen den rituellen Mählern, die in den paulinischen Gemeinden und denen der *Didache* begangen wurden, die jeweils ihr rituelles Zentrum in den Gebeten über Brot und Becher und den damit verbundenen Handlungen (Austeilung und Verzehr) hatten. Diese Übereinstimmung wird dadurch unterstrichen, daß sowohl Paulus als auch die *Didache* in diesem Zusammenhang von "geistlicher Speise" und "geistlichem Trank" sprechen (1 Kor. 10:3-5: πνευματικὸν βρῶμα und πνευματικὸν πόμα bzw. *Did.* 10:3: πνευματικὴ τροφή καὶ πότον).

²⁵ Die Abfolge Becher—Brot in 1 Kor. 10:16 wird häufig als Indiz für eine derartige Abfolge im realen Mahlvollzug gewertet, vgl. Schröter, *Abendmahl*, p. 29. Doch ist das nicht zwingend, da die Abfolge auch argumentativ erklärbar ist: Die Gegenüberstellung mit paganen Kultmählern ist hinsichtlich des Bechers (Trankspende!) viel eher durchführbar und daher die Voranstellung durchaus sinnvoll, dagegen ist die Entgegensetzung τράπεζα κυρίου/δαιμονίων wesentlich bemühter.

²⁶ Die grundsätzliche Übereinstimmung in der Abfolge betont auch De Jonge, "History," pp. 221-223.

Diese grundsätzliche Übereinstimmung im Ablauf schließt jedoch keineswegs aus, daß es im inhaltlichen Verständnis des Mahls erhebliche Unterschiede gab. In den paulinischen Gemeinden wurde, jedenfalls soweit Paulus hier die Mahlpraxis und das Mahlverständnis geprägt hatte, in den Mahlgebete "der Tod des Herrn verkündigt, bis daß er kommt"—in den Gebeten der *Didache* ist dagegen vom Tod des Herrn nirgends die Rede. Die Bedeutung der Person Jesu, der übrigens in den Gebeten nie κύριος sondern παῖς genannt wird, liegt für die *Didache* nicht in der soteriologischen Bedeutung für die Glaubenden, sondern in der Vermittlung des Lebens und der Erkenntnis für die Teilnehmer am rituellen Mahl (*Did.* 9:3; 10:2). Aufgrund dieser Differenzen ist es mehr als zweifelhaft, daß in den Gemeinden der *Didache* auf diese Mahlgebete ein zweiter Teil mit ausdrücklicher Verwendung der Einsetzungsworte von 1 Kor. 11:23-25 gefolgt sein soll, die ja ein ganz anders ausgerichtetes christologisches Gesamtkonzept enthielten.

Im Blick auf die Tradition der Einsetzungsworte selbst ist festzustellen, daß Paulus sie den von ihm gegründeten Gemeinden vermittelt hat und daß ihre Funktion darin bestand, den Gemeinden zu erklären, in welcher Weise ihr gegenwärtiges Gemeindemahl mit dem Tod des Herrn verknüpft ist. Dies leistet diese Tradition in der Tat, aber es ist auch deutlich: Sie erklärt, aber sie ist keine Verkündigung oder gar ein Gebetstext. In der Sicht des Paulus war es wichtig, diese Tradition zu kennen, um zu verstehen, worum es im Herrenmahl geht²⁷—und wenn er *über* das Herrenmahl redet wie in 1 Kor. 11:17-34, dann zitiert er diese Tradition auch. Dies bedeutet jedoch keineswegs, daß diese Tradition auch im Mahlverlauf selbst, etwa zusätzlich zu den Gebeten über Brot und Wein, verwendet wurde.²⁸ Es handelt sich bei den Einsetzungsworten um eine kateche-

²⁷ Theobald, "Leib und Blut," p. 122 spricht mit Recht von einem "Referenztext... mit kultbegründender Funktion"; dieser Text ist "auf einer Metaebene angesiedelt im Vergleich zur Primärebene der eucharistischen Gebete, der Segensworte, des Lobpreises und der Bitten über die Gaben und Mahlteilnehmer, wobei diese Primärebene es ist, welche Eucharistie im Vollzug eigentlich konstituiert."

²⁸ So jedoch Jeremias, *Abendmahlsworte*, p. 100, der in Analogie zur (von ihm vorausgesetzten) Rolle von Dtn. 26:5-9 bei der Passahfeier die Abendmahlsworte als rezitierten Texte verstehen möchte, der dann anschließend ausgelegt wurde. Doch ist schon die Voraussetzung für die Analogisierung nicht tragfähig, nämlich die Annahme, daß das κυριακὸν δεῖπνον der paulinischen Gemeinden vom Passah her zu verstehen sei, ein Hintergrund, der sogar in der stark judenchristlichen *Didache* völlig fehlt!

tische und nicht um eine liturgische Tradition. Die früheste Verwendung in der Liturgie ist auch erst in der *Traditio apostolica* faßbar.²⁹

Für die *Didache* bedeutet das:

(1) Es gibt keinen Grund für die Annahme, daß im rituellen Gemeindemahl der *Didache* die Einsetzungsworte je benutzt worden sind. Sogar für die paulinischen Gemeinden selbst ist dies nicht zu postulieren. Daher kann der Verweis auf das Fehlen der Einsetzungsworte die Hypothese eines zweiten Teils des rituellen Mahls im Anschluß an die Gebete von *Didache* 9 und 10 nicht begründen.

(2) Da der "Tod des Herrn" in den Gebeten von *Didache* 9-10 auch nicht ansatzweise eine Rolle spielt, ist es mehr als zweifelhaft, daß die Einsetzungsworte in den Gemeinden der *Didache* überhaupt Verwendung fanden und wie in den paulinischen Gemeinden in der Katechese vermittelt wurden, so daß sie dann als Meta-Text der Mahlfeier dienen konnten. Die Gebete von *Didache* 9-10 und die Einsetzungsworte weisen eine so unterschiedliche christologische Ausrichtung auf, daß sie sich nicht gegenseitig erklären können.

2. *Didache* 10:6-7

Geht man aufgrund der bisherigen Überlegungen davon aus, daß die Gebete von *Didache* 9-10 das vollständige rituelle Mahl dieser Gemeinden widerspiegeln, sieht man sich jedoch einer beträchtlichen Schwierigkeit gegenüber, nämlich der Frage, welche Funktion die Anweisung von *Did.* 10:6c hat: "Wenn jemand heilig ist, komme er; wenn er es nicht ist, tue er Buße." Diese Aufforderung verweist ja auf einen noch ausstehenden Teil der Mahlfeier, und solange nicht geklärt ist, worauf sich diese Aufforderung bezieht, ist ein Gesamtverständnis der Mahlfeier der *Didache* nicht möglich.

Zur Beurteilung ist eine Gesamtanalyse von *Did.* 10:6-7 erforderlich. Die Schlußwendung des Abschlußgebetes von *Did.* 10:1-5 lautet:

V. 5c: ὅτι σου ἐστὶν ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,³⁰ "Denn dein ist die Kraft und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit."

²⁹ Vgl. Schröter, *Abendmahl*, pp. 113-122.

³⁰ Es handelt sich um einen eindeutigen Gebetsschluß, vgl. den Abschluß der Becher-Eucharistie in 9:2 und der Brot-Eucharistie in 9:4. Natürlich kann diese Wendung auch inner-

Daran schließen sich an:

V. 6a: Ἐλθέτω χάρις καὶ παρελθέτω ὁ κόσμος οὗτος, "Es komme die Gnade, es vergehe diese Welt."

b: ὠσαννὰ τῷ θεῷ³¹ Δαυίδ, "Hosanna dem Gott Davids."

c: Εἴ τις ἅγιός ἐστι, ἐρχέσθω· εἴ τις οὐκ ἔστι, μετανοεῖτω, "Wenn jemand heilig ist, komme er; wenn er es nicht ist, tue er Buße."

d: μαραναθά. Ἀμήν, "Maranatha. Amen."

V. 7: τοῖς δὲ προφήταις ἐπιτρέπετε εὐχαριστεῖν ὅσα θέλουσιν, "Aber den Propheten erlaubt, Dankgebete zu sprechen, soviel sie wollen."

Dieser Text vermittelt Einblicke in den weiteren Verlauf des Gemeindemahls: Nach dem Schlußgebet durch den Liturgen folgen kurze Sätze, ja Ausrufe, die sich auf mehrere Sprecher verteilen. Zumindest V. 6b und 6d sind als Gebetsrufe von Mahlteilnehmern denkbar. Dagegen ist V. 7 eine agendarische Anweisung über das Recht der Propheten in Bezug auf die Dankgebete. Diese Anweisung richtet sich an den Benutzer der *Didache*, für den dieses Handbuch gedacht ist. In der Literatur werden grundsätzlich zwei Möglichkeiten diskutiert, diese Anweisung zu verstehen:

(a) Die ἐπισκόποι (15:1), die als Leiter des rituellen Mahls vorausgesetzt werden, sind verpflichtet, die in *Didache* 9 und 10 niedergelegten Gebete zu benutzen, die Propheten als Charismatiker sind dagegen frei, ihre eigenen, und d.h. auch spontan formulierten Gebete zu verwenden, wenn sie die Eucharistie leiten.³²

(b) Nach dem Schlußgebet durch den Gemeindeleiter wird es den Propheten gestattet, zusätzliche Gebete anzufügen und zwar ohne irgendwelche Beschränkungen.

Welche dieser beiden Erklärungen in Betracht kommt, hängt auch vom Kontext ab—doch ist gerade der äußerst umstritten.

Die Wendung εἴ τις ἅγιός ἐστιν, ἐρχέσθω· εἴ τις οὐκ ἔστι, μετανοεῖτω, wird, wenn sie nicht als Hinweis auf einen zweiten, in der

halb eines Gebets als Zäsur erscheinen, so in 9:3 und 10:2, aber sie fehlt am Ende der Gebete von *Didache* 9 nie, und das wäre hier der Fall, wenn man V. 6 (ganz oder teilweise) noch zum Schlußgebet rechnen würde. Insofern ist die Ergänzung von "Amen" im koptischen Text nicht unsachgemäß.

³¹ Zum textkritischen Problem vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 203 mit Anm. 86.

³² Vgl. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, p. 205, der diese Deutung bevorzugt. Doch wird sie durch das quantitative ὅσα nicht nahegelegt. Eine ähnliche Erklärung schlägt Draper, "Ritual Process," pp. 128, 132 vor: Das Problem bestehe nicht in Frage, ob die Propheten an die Gebete der *Didache* gebunden sind oder nicht, sondern ob sie das Mahl leiten dürfen. Doch bezieht sich ὅσα θέλουσιν eindeutig auf die Gebete selbst.

Didache ausgelassenen Teil des Mahls angesehen wird, als Verdoppelung der Ausschlußformulierung von 9:5 bewertet.³³ Doch ist dies allzu deutlich eine Verlegenheitslösung. Dagegen spricht:

(1) 9:5 ist eine agendarische Anweisung (wie 10:7), 10:6c ist dagegen ein Teil der Liturgie, eine vorgeschriebene Formulierung, mit der sich der Leiter des rituellen Mahls an die Mahlteilnehmer wendet, die er direkt anredet.³⁴

(2) Die Kriterien für die Zulassung sind unterschiedlich: In 9:5 ist das Kriterium die Taufe—ein allgemein überprüfbares Kriterium, in 10:6c ist das Kriterium die "Heiligkeit." Wenn diese nach dem Mahl an die Teilnehmer gerichtet wird, handelt es sich bei allen Angeordneten ohnehin um Getaufte—die Kriterien können also nicht identisch sein.³⁵

(3) Nach Abschluß der Mahlfeier kommt eine Anweisung, die den Ausschluß von der Feier selbst zum Gegenstand hat, einfach zu spät.

Ergebnis

Auf der Grundlage der bisherigen Beobachtungen kann ein Lösungsvorschlag erarbeitet werden, welcher die Schwächen der beiden bisher dominierenden Positionen vermeidet.

Es ist davon auszugehen, daß im Anschluß an das agendarisch vorgeschriebene Schlußgebet durch den Liturgen die Mahlfeier nicht abrupt beendet ist, sondern daß danach Platz ist für Gebetsäußerungen der Teilnehmer. Dabei kann die Bitte *ἐλθέτω χάρις καὶ παραελθέτω ὁ κόσμος οὗτος* (V. 6a), die den eschatologischen Schluß des Abschlußgebets (V. 5) aufnimmt, durchaus als Übergang zu diesem Teil angesehen werden. Schriftlich aufgenommen in die Agende sind nur die kurzen Gebetsrufe *ὡσαννὰ τῷ θεῷ Δαβὶδ* und *μαρναθά*, aber

³³ Vgl. Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl*, p. 405; Draper, "Ritual Process," p. 134; Schröter, *Abendmahl*, p. 68.

³⁴ Die agendarischen Anweisungen und die Aufforderung von 10:6c sind bezeichnenderweise auch unterschiedlich formuliert: Die agendarischen Anweisungen stehen in der 2. Pers. Plural (9:5: "eure Eucharistie"; 10:7: "gestattet"), wobei 9:5 deutlich zeigt, daß hier nicht die Mahlteilnehmer (im Rahmen der Liturgie) angesprochen sind, sondern die Leser (und Benutzer) dieses Handbuchs. Dagegen ist die an die Mahlteilnehmer selbst gerichtete Aufforderung in 10:6c mit dem Imperativ der 3. Pers. Singular formuliert.

³⁵ Zur Illustration kann durchaus auf *Didache* 14 verwiesen werden: Hier wird ebenfalls neben der Taufe ein zusätzliches Kriterium für die Mahlteilnahme genannt: die Versöhnung mit dem Nächsten.

sie weisen unzweideutig darauf hin, daß im Ablauf der Mahlfeier dies die Stelle für die Beteiligung der Mahlteilnehmer ist. Dabei ist nicht anzunehmen, daß sich die Beteiligung der Gemeinde nur auf derartige Rufe beschränkte, sondern auch in kürzeren oder längeren Gebeten bestand. Auf diesem Hintergrund wird beides verständlich: die Anweisung an den Liturgen über das Recht der Propheten zur Danksagung in V. 7 und die rätselhafte Anweisung von V. 6c, die der Liturg an die Mahlteilnehmer richten soll.

(1) Rechnet man mit weiteren Gebeten, die hier natürlich nicht aufgenommen sind, weil sie als frei formulierte Gebete gerade nicht Teil der Agende sein können, dann ergibt sich ein klarer Sinn für die Anweisung in V. 7: Die Propheten haben nicht nur wie alle übrigen Mahlteilnehmer das Recht, zusätzliche Dankgebete zu formulieren, sie können dies auch tun ὅσα θέλουσιν, d.h. "soviel sie wollen," unterliegen also keinerlei Beschränkungen seitens des liturgischen Leiters der Mahlfeier. Diese Sonderstellung der Propheten im Rahmen der Mahlfeier entspricht damit durchaus ihrer sonstigen Rolle in der *Didache*, heißt es doch in 11:7 programmatisch: "Jeden Propheten, der im Geist redet, stellt nicht auf die Probe und fällt kein Urteil über ihn."³⁶ Da das Gebet in besonderer Weise in der Urchristenheit der Ort für das Wirken des Geistes ist,³⁷ ist es verständlich, daß gerade in Bezug auf die Gebete der Propheten im Anschluß an die agendarischen Mahlgebete eine solche Regelung notwendig war.

(2) Setzt man voraus, daß im Anschluß an das agendarische Schlußgebet die Möglichkeit für freie Dankgebete weiterer Mahlteilnehmer bestand, ist V. 6c ohne Schwierigkeit als Aufforderung zu verstehen, jetzt zu diesem Teil der Mahlfeier überzugehen. Dabei ist eine gewisse Regulierung unverkennbar:

(a) Wer ein Gebet in der Gemeindeversammlung sprechen möchte, sollte dafür qualifiziert sein, er soll "heilig" sein—wobei offenbar nicht näher erläutert werden muß, was darunter zu verstehen ist. Immerhin impliziert diese Bedingung die Möglichkeit, daß der Gemeindeführer Mahlteilnehmern auch das Recht zum öffentlichen Gebet verweigern kann.

³⁶ Dies wird durch dadurch noch bekräftigt, daß das synoptische Logion über die Unvergeßbarkeit der Sünde wider den Geist (vgl. Mt. 12:31/Lk. 12:10) angefügt wird.

³⁷ Vgl. im NT Gal. 4:6; Röm. 8:15, 26-27.

(b) Aus der ausdrücklichen Bestimmung in 10:7, daß die Propheten ohne jede Beschränkung in der Mahlversammlung beten dürfen, kann indirekt geschlossen werden, daß die sonstigen Mahlteilnehmer in ihrem Gebet den Vorgaben und Weisungen des Gemeindeleiters unterlagen, was zum Zweck eines geordneten Ablaufs auch sicher sinnvoll war.³⁸

(c) Schließlich ist es sogar möglich, auch das viel umrätselte "Kommen" in analoger Weise zu verstehen. Wenn damit gemeint sein sollte, daß der Beter zunächst an die Stelle kommen soll, die der liturgische Leiter des rituellen Gemeindemahls innehat, dann wäre damit ebenfalls eine gewisse Ordnung in den sicher häufig chaotischen Ablauf solch freier Gebete gebracht worden.

Im Ergebnis zeigt sich einerseits eine deutliche Nähe in den Mahlfeiern, die in den paulinischen Gemeinden und denen der *Didache* gefeiert wurden. Diese Nähe besteht aber gerade nicht darin, daß jeweils im Mahlablauf die sog. Einsetzungsworte zitiert wurden. Dies ist noch nicht einmal für die paulinischen Gemeinden vorauszusetzen und führt im Falle der *Didache* nicht nur zu der an sich schon prekären Hypothese einer Lücke gerade im dann ja zentralen Teil der Mahlfeier, sondern es ergeben sich auch unaufhebbare inhaltliche Spannungen zu den tatsächlich in *Didache* 9-10 überlieferten Eucharistiegebeten. Die Übereinstimmung besteht vielmehr darin, daß jeweils eine Gemeindeversammlung als reales Mahl stattfindet, bei dem zwei zentrale Bestandteile, Brot und Kelch, durch an Gott gerichtete Gebete als Ausdruck der von der Person Jesu ausgehenden Heilswirkung für die Mahlteilnehmer interpretiert werden und so zu "geistlicher Speise" und "geistlichem Trank" werden.

Rechnet man mit Henk Jan de Jonge damit, daß 1 Korinther 14 sich auf die Fortsetzung des Gemeindemahls durch eine Gemeindeversammlung mit Prophetie, ekstatischen Äußerungen, Gesang und Gebet bezieht,³⁹ dann zeigt sich auch an diesem Punkt eine gewisse Nähe zur *Didache*, insofern hier im Anschluß an das vom Gemeindeleiter gesprochene Schlußgebet weitere freie Gebete von anderen

³⁸ Vgl. die Mühe, die Paulus in 1 Kor. 14:27-33 damit hat, der Gemeinde in Korinth zu vermitteln, daß nicht mehrere Gemeindemitglieder gleichzeitig beten bzw. prophezeien sollen.

³⁹ De Jonge, "History," pp. 215-216, in deutlicher Entsprechung zum hellenistischen (jüdischen und paganen) Mahl, das aus *syssition* und *symposion* bestand (pp. 223-225).

Mahlteilnehmern und insbesondere auch von Propheten folgten.⁴⁰ Der eigenständige Charakter der Mahlgemeinschaft der *Didache* besteht dann nicht so sehr im unterschiedlichen Ablauf, sondern vor allem im inhaltlichen Verständnis der Heilsbedeutung der Person Jesu, die für Paulus zentral mit dessen Todesgeschick verbunden ist, für die *Didache* dagegen nicht.

⁴⁰ De Jonge, "History," pp. 221-222 hält es auch für die Gemeinden der *Didache* wahrscheinlich, daß sich an das rituelle Gemeindemahl eine Gemeindeversammlung mit Unterweisungen, Gebeten der Propheten usw. anschloß. Die freien Gebete im Anschluß an das agendarische Schlußgebet nach dem Mahl sind zwar eindeutig auf das Mahl bezogen, können aber dennoch als Scharnier betrachtet werden, das zur Gemeindeversammlung überleitete, die jedoch, da sie agendarisch nicht reguliert war, auch keine Erwähnung in der *Didache* findet.

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IMAGE, FORM AND TRANSFORMATION.
A SEMANTIC TAXONOMY OF PAUL'S "MORPHIC"
LANGUAGE

George H. van Kooten

This paper examines Paul's language of the image of God.¹ The notion of the image of God in Paul is, of course, part of his Adam Christology, which has been highlighted by James Dunn, especially in his *Christology in the Making* and his *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*.² The most explicit occurrences of this Adamic Christology, in which Adam and Christ, the second Adam, are put on a par, are found in 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-47 and Rom. 5:12-19, where Adam is mentioned by name.³ The first passage reads:

For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. (1 Cor. 15:21-22)⁴

This contrast is elaborated upon in Romans 5. There Paul sketches a similar opposition between the man through whom sin and death came into the world, and the other man, of whom the first was a type or prototype; through this latter man grace, righteousness and life were imparted to many (Rom. 5:12-19). This reads like an elaboration of 1 Cor. 15:21-22. At the end of 1 Corinthians 15, however, it is precisely the contrast between Adam and Christ that is further highlighted. In this second Corinthian passage, the contrast between both human beings is repeated, but now worded explicitly in terms of the first and second man, the man from the earth and the man from heaven:

Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is

¹ I wish to thank Dr Maria Sherwood-Smith for her correction of the English of this paper.

² J.D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making. A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, London 1989²; *id.*, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, Edinburgh 1998.

³ See 1 Cor. 15:22, 45 and Rom. 5:14.

⁴ Biblical translations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version, with minor alterations when necessary.

first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Cor. 15:45-49)

This passage reveals that the notion of the image of God also belongs to the core of Paul's Adam Christology. Dunn has argued that Paul develops his Adam Christology not only in the above passages from 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5, but throughout his letters. I agree with him that "Adam plays a larger role in Paul's theology than is usually realized," that "Adam is a key figure in Paul's attempt to express his understanding both of Christ and of man," and that "it is necessary to trace the extent of the Adam motif in Paul if we are to appreciate the force of his Adam Christology."⁵ In this paper I wish to contribute to this search by focusing on the semantic field of the image of God, which is part of Paul's Adam Christology. It seems that the semantic-conceptual field of the notion of the image of God is larger and more coherent than is often realized.

In this paper I shall argue that the notion of the image of God not only comprises (§ 1) the terminology of "image" (εἰκών), but also (§ 2a) that of μορφή ("form") and its cognate terms μορφόομαι ("take on form, be formed"), σύμμορφος ("having the same form, similar in form"), συμμορφίζομαι ("be conformed to, take on the same form as"), and, last but not least, μεταμορφόομαι ("be transformed, be changed into the same form"). As regards the latter word, Dunn does not seem to realize that this verb is part of the image of God language. Instead, as we shall see in due course, he refers to a triple background of this notion in (a) the idea of metamorphosis which is deemed "common to many religious strands of the ancient world," (b) the language of moral transformation, and (c) a Jewish apocalyptic usage of the idea of transformation.⁶ Yet, as I shall suggest after a comparison between Paul and Philo (§ 2b), it is far more likely that Paul's use of the concept of metamorphosis does not owe much to either Greek or Jewish-apocalyptic ideas of transformation, but should be seen in the context of his reflections on God's image. In

⁵ Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, p. 101.

⁶ See Dunn's commentary on Rom. 12:2; J.D.G. Dunn, *Romans* 2, Dallas 1988, p. 713.

general terms, the simple background seems to be that images have forms (as will be argued in § 2c).

This approach gives rise to a more precise semantic taxonomy of Paul's concept of the image of God. As regards Paul's Adam Christology, Gordon Fee, in his recent *Pauline Christology* convincingly concludes:

So Adam Christology there is in Paul's thought, to be sure; but in terms of actual language and echoes from Gen 1-2, it is limited to two kinds of passages: first, explicit contrasts between Christ and Adam ...; and, second, where the incarnate Christ is seen as the true bearer of the divine image, who is also re-creating a people who bear that image with him.⁷

Fee himself adopts the centre ground between "a *minimalist* position, which deals only with the three passages where Adam is specifically mentioned" (see above) and "a *maximalist* position, such as one finds in the work of J.D.G. Dunn or N.T. Wright"; Fee's position is "based on what appear to be *certain* connections made by Paul between Christ and the actual *language* of Gen. 1-3."⁸ This language consists of the terminology of the image of God.

Yet even if one agrees with Fee that Paul's Adam Christology should be based (primarily) on this language, the extent of this semantic field still remains to be charted. In his polemics with Dunn, Fee disputes, for instance, that in Phil. 2:6-8 μορφή is virtually synonymous with εἰκών. This issue will be discussed below, but let me point out in passing that Fee's criticism is ill-founded, since, on the contrary, the language of μορφή is intrinsically linked with that of εἰκών. As will be argued, the extent of the semantic and conceptual field of the divine image is larger than might be assumed at first glance; the scope of Paul's Adam Christology is extensive. The extent of this field is so large, and especially its inclusion of morphic language so important that, without much exaggeration, one could characterize Paul's Christology and anthropology as "morphic." This semantic taxonomy of only a part of Paul's Adam Christology shows that this type of Christology is indeed very dominant in Paul.

⁷ G.D. Fee, *Pauline Christology. An Exegetical-Theological Study*, Peabody 2007, ch. 13: "Jesus as Second Adam," pp. 513-529, esp. 523.

⁸ Fee, *Pauline Christology*, p. 513.

The emphasis in this paper is on the detailed mapping of the semantic and conceptual field of “image of God.” I shall, however, draw on the interpretation of the image of God in ancient Judaism, either by way of comparison or contrast, wherever this seems appropriate.

1. The Terminology of Image

I shall first give a brief survey of the actual occurrences of the terminology of εἰκών in Paul’s extant writings, roughly according to what seems to be the most likely chronological order. As we shall see, the term εἰκών occurs in those letters, 1-2 Corinthians and Romans, which also contain Paul’s explicit mentions of Adam.

In 1 Corinthians 11, in his discussion of the need for women to veil their heads, Paul states that a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and glory of God: εἰκών καὶ δόξα Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων (1 Cor. 11:7). This language clearly refers back to the image of God mentioned in Gen. 1:26-27. Later in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul again draws on this language when he explains that “Just as we have borne the image (εἰκών) of the man of dust, we will also bear the image (εἰκών) of the man of heaven” (1 Cor. 15:49): καὶ καθὼς ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ, φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου. As we learn from 2 Corinthians, where the language of εἰκών is employed once again, this bearing of the image of the second Adam is not only an eschatological event. Rather, it involves a transformational process in the present, based on transformation into the image of Christ in his capacity—as 1 Corinthians 15 implies—as the heavenly man: ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ τὴν δόξαν κυρίου κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν, καθάπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος—“And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18). The fact this image and glory are indeed Christ’s is rendered explicit in the immediately succeeding passage, when Paul refers to τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκών τοῦ Θεοῦ—“the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4). The glory of

this Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4), thus, is the glory of the second Adam, just as the first Adam was God's image and glory (1 Cor. 11:7).

The notion of the glory of Adam is reminiscent of the importance of this notion in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The language of Adam, whom God "fashioned in the likeness of [his] glory" and destined to "walk in a land of glory" (4Q504 frag. 8 4-7), is applied to the members of the Qumran community: "*to them shall belong all the glory of Adam*" (1QS IV 23; cf. CD-A IV 20; 1QH^a IV 15). Adam's glory is being re-established in their community. Something similar is happening in the Christian community, according to 2 Corinthians 3-4. If people convert to Christ, the second Adam, and reflect his glory (2 Cor. 3:16, 18; 4:4), they experience a transformation ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν, "from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18). The language of the image and glory of God in 1-2 Corinthians is thus rooted in an ancient Jewish understanding of the image of God.

At the same time, as can be deduced from 1 Corinthians 15, Paul's mode of expression has been borrowed to some extent from pagan references to the images of the gods. When Paul writes that "Just as we have borne the image (ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα) of the man of dust, we will also bear the image (φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα) of the man of heaven" (1 Cor. 15:49), he avails himself of the imagery of carrying round a statue of a god. There are close analogies in the Greek Stoic philosopher Epictetus, for instance, according to whom man carries a god within him:

But they [i.e. all creatures other than man] are not of primary importance, nor portions of divinity. But you are a being of primary importance; you are a fragment of God; you have within you a part of Him. Why, then, are you ignorant of your own kinship? ... You are bearing God about with you (θεὸν περιφέρεις), you poor wretch, and know it not! Do you suppose I am speaking of some external God? *It is within yourself that you bear him* (ἐν σαυτῷ φέρεις αὐτόν), and do not perceive that you are defiling him with impure thoughts and filthy actions. Yet in the presence of even an image of God (καὶ ἀγάλματος μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ παρόντος) you would not dare to do anything of the things you are now doing. (*Discourses* II 8:11-14)⁹

⁹ Cf. J. Haussleiter, "Deus internus," *RAC* 3 (1957), pp. 794-842, esp. 807 with reference to Epictetus, *Diss.* II 8:11-14 and Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* XII 23.6: "Auch das Adjektiv θεοφόρητος, von Gott getragen, verwendet Marc[us Aurelius] einmal (12, 23, 6), das passive Korrelat zum Gottragen des Epiktet"; and pp. 810-811 with reference to Iamblichus, *De*

The internal act of carrying (the image of) God within oneself is contrasted with the external reverence paid to the visible statue of a god.

Another particularly instructive example can be found in Philo who, in his *Legatio ad Gaium*, explains in everyday pagan language what the Jews are doing:

Holding that the laws are oracles vouchsafed by God and having been trained in this doctrine from their earliest years, they carry as a statue (ἀγαματοφοροῦσι) the images (εἰκόνας) of the commandments enshrined in their souls. Then as they contemplate their shapes and forms (τύπους καὶ μορφάς) they always think of them with awe. (*Leg.* 210-211)

Philo applies the language of the pagan practices of carrying round idols in a metaphorical way to the way in which Jews carry round the image of the law within their minds. In a similar way, I would suggest, Paul speaks of human beings carrying the image of God: first the distorted image of the first Adam, which is only in a remote sense still an image of God, but subsequently the image of the second Adam.

A similar antithesis between the images of idols and the image of God may be present in Paul's Romans, which contains the other occurrences of εἰκών in Paul's extant letters.¹⁰ In Romans 1, Paul criticizes those who have degenerated into idol-worshippers: "they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being (ἐν ὁμοιώματι εἰκόνοσ φθαρτοῦ ἀνθρώπου) or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles" (1:23).¹¹ In Romans, these

mysteriis 3.5: θεοφορία; cf. also 3.25: ἡ δὲ θεοφορία τελειότης καὶ σωτηρία τῆς ψυχῆς—"divine θεοφορία is a perfection and deliverance of the soul" (trans. E.C. Clarke/J.M. Dillon/J.P. Hershbll, *Iamblichus: De mysteriis. Translated with an Introduction and Notes*, Atlanta 2003). Haussleiter takes the phrase "bearing God about with you (θεὸν περιφέρεις)" in Epictetus, *Discourses* II 8.12 as a possible reference to the bearing of amulets. See Haussleiter, "Deus internus," p. 807: "Nach Dölger, ACh 4 (1934) 72 wird Epiktet hier an den "Gott" als Amulett gedacht haben." Translations of classical sources are normally taken from the Loeb Classical Library, with occasional small alterations.

¹⁰ For the Ps.-Pauline letters see also Col. 1:15 about Christ, ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκών τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου; and Col. 3:10 about the restoration of the new man who is renewed εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν.

¹¹ For Paul's polemical purpose behind this passage, and behind the beginning of his letter in Romans 1, see G.H. van Kooten, "Pagan and Jewish Monotheism according to Varro, Plutarch and St Paul: The Aniconic, Monotheistic Beginnings of Rome's Pagan Cult—Romans 1:19-25 in a Roman Context," in: A. Hilhorst/É. Puech/E. Tigheelaar (eds), *Flores Florentino*.

images of idols contrast sharply with the image of God's son, whose form God has predestined the readers to resemble: προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (Rom. 8:29). Whereas exchanging the glory of God for images of idols is a sign of mankind's decline, its restoration takes place when man is conformed to God's image.

This antagonism between the image of God and idols seems already to be part of the Old Testament background to the notion of the image of God. It is not unlikely that the assertion that man is created "in God's image" (Gen. 1:26-27) could bear anti-idolatrous overtones, as the term "image" (צֶלֶם) is one of the words used to refer to idols (Num. 33:52; 2 Kgs. 11:18; 2 Chron. 23:17; Ezek. 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; Amos 5:26). In this respect the priestly author of Genesis is resembled by Ezekiel (see Ezek. 1:26-28). As John Kutsko notes in his comments on the "image of God" in Ezekiel:

Ezekiel struggles to find appropriate language that indicates both human likeness and divine incomparability. The prophet directs his efforts in several directions: he is at once attempting to align himself with Priestly theology, to contradict Mesopotamian ideology, and to refrain from language that would explicitly legitimize the notion of other gods. Fundamentally, however, P and Ezekiel are dealing with the same answer, approached from different angles: humans are like God, and God is like humans. In this answer, both P and Ezekiel remove other gods from the equation.¹²

This polemical anti-idolatrous understanding of man as the image of God also surfaces in later sources. In a passage denouncing idolatry, the author of *Sibylline Oracles* III addresses mankind as follows:

Men, who have the form which God moulded in his image
(ἄνθρωποι θεόπλαστον ἔχοντες ἐν εἰκόνι μορφήν),
Why do you wander in vain, and not walk the straight path
ever mindful of the immortal creator? (III 8-10)

Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino García Martínez, Leiden/Boston 2007, pp. 633-651.

¹² J.F. Kutsko, "Ezekiel's Anthropology and Its Ethical Implications," in: M.S. Odell/J.T. Strong (eds), *The Book of Ezekiel. Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, Atlanta 2000, pp. 119-141, esp. 132. On the idea of the image of God and the polemic against the idols of Ancient Near Eastern cults, see also A. Schüle, "Made in the 'Image of God': The Concepts of Divine Images in Gen 1-3," *ZAW* 117 (2005), pp. 1-20, esp. 1-2, 9-11. On P and Ezekiel, see also J.M. Miller, "In the 'Image' and 'Likeness' of God," *JBL* 91 (1972), pp. 289-304 at p. 303.

As the passage continues by criticizing man-made idols (III 29-35), it is possible that this sentence hints at an opposition between the image of God and the other images of idolatrous cults, although here the latter are not called εἰκόνες but εἰδωλα, so that it is not clear whether such a contrast is deliberately intended. A full-blown antithesis does come to the fore, however, in book VIII of the *Sibylline Oracles*. The passage in question is again part of a denunciation of idolatry (VIII 359-428), spoken by God himself; it develops an explicit antithesis between the images (εἰκόνες) used in pagan idolatry and man, as God's image (εἰκών):

Godless ones also call their images (τὰς εἰκόνας αὐτῶν) gods,
abandoning the Creator, thinking to have
all hope and life from them. Trusting
in dumb and speechless things with evil result, they are ignorant of good
end.

I myself proposed two ways, of life and death,
And proposed to the judgment to choose good life.
But they turned eagerly to death and eternal fire.

Man is my image (εἰκὼν ἐστ' ἄνθρωπος ἐμῇ), having right reason.
(VIII 395-402)

Here, the opposition between the images of the gods and the image which is man, endowed with right reason, is rendered explicit. In essence it is the same opposition as that already found within P and Ezekiel. The logical conclusion of this way of thinking, that man, in his capacity as God's image, is the only image of God and as such merits worship, is drawn in the *Life of Adam and Eve* (*LAE*). According to *LAE*, if Adam is the true image of God, he constitutes the proper object of worship, not by fellow human beings, but by the angels (*LAE* [Oriental and Latin versions] 13:1-15:3; 37:3; 39:1-3). This remarkable view—that Adam, in his capacity as the image of God, is to be worshipped as an idol by angels—could be taken as the most radical consequence of the extraordinary position accorded to man in the Priestly Source, and shows the inherent antithesis between this image and the alternative images of pagan cult.

This appears to be very similar to the antithesis which Paul draws between the images for which God's glory was exchanged and Christ, as the proper image of God, to which the Christians are being conformed.

From this overview it emerges that in Paul's extant letters the language of εἰκών appears in 1-2 Corinthians and Romans, precisely the letters in which the contrasting pair Adam and Christ occur, constituting Paul's explicit Adam Christology. This is no coincidence. The letters in which an explicit Adam Christology is unfolded also contain the designation of Adam as the image of God, be it Adam I or Adam II. Nor is it coincidental that these letters are addressed to largely pagan communities; in a letter within a Judaizing context, as Galatians shows, it is not Adam but rather Abraham who is the focus of attention.

2. The Terminology of Forms

a. A Survey of Morphic Language in Paul

Let me first draw attention to the two passages in Paul which explicitly link the terminology of εἰκών with the terminology of forms. In 2 Cor. 3:18, a passage already quoted above, Paul posits that "all of us," i.e. all Christ-believers, "with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another"—ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες ἀνακεκαλλυμένοι προσώπῳ τὴν δόξαν κυρίου κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν. Here, the language of image and form is linked inasmuch as a transformation or metamorphosis takes place into the image of God (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4). We shall return to the concept of metamorphosis below, in the discussion of Rom. 12:2, where this concept reoccurs. For now, it will suffice to highlight that the terminologies of image and form do indeed intersect.

This also appears to be the case in Rom. 8:29, also quoted above, when Paul says that God has predestined the Christ-believers to be similar in form to the image of his son, Christ: προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ. The reason *why* these terminologies overlap has not yet been fully explored in scholarly debate, and will be established further below. First we shall continue with a survey of Paul's morphic language, identifying any particular features or exegetical problems encountered in a kind of inventory.

The notion of becoming similar in form to Christ that features in the passage in Romans just discussed also occurs, in reverse order, in

Gal. 4:19: here it is not the believers who are said to be conformed to Christ, but rather Christ who will “receive form in you,” the Galatians: μορφωθῇ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν.

A very different use of morphic language seems to be involved in Phil. 2:6-7, in the well-known piece of hymnic prose known as the Philippian hymn. The readers are exhorted to be of one mind with Christ Jesus, “who, though he was in the form of God (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων), did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave (μορφὴν δούλου λαβών), being born in human likeness” (2:6-7).

Paul’s talk about God’s form is closely matched by that of Josephus in his *Contra Apionem*. In a passage on the first commandment, in explaining the Jewish conception of God, Josephus writes:

What, then, are the precepts and prohibitions of our Law? They are simple and familiar. At their head stands one of which God is the theme. The universe is in God’s hands; perfect and blessed, self-sufficing and sufficing for all, He is the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things. By His works and bounties He is plainly seen, indeed more manifest than ought else; but His form and magnitude surpass our powers of description (μορφὴν δὲ καὶ μέγεθος ἡμῖν ἄφατος). No materials, however costly, are fit to make an image of Him (πᾶσα μὲν ὕλη πρὸς εἰκόνα τὴν τούτου κἂν ἢ πολυτελεῖς ἄτιμος); no art has skill to conceive and represent it. The like of Him we have never seen, we do not imagine, and it is impious to conjecture (οὐδὲν ὅμοιον οὐτ’ ἐπινοοῦμεν οὐτ’ εἰκάζειν ἐστὶν ὄσιον). We behold His works ... (*Ap.* II 190-191)

According to Josephus, God does indeed possess a form, but this is ἄφατος, inexpressible. For this reason, no image of him can be made in the form of a statue. Josephus also emphasizes this later, in a passage in which he attacks the Greeks’ gross and immoral ideas about the gods:

They have even deified Terror and Fear [Deimos and Phobos, attendants of Ares, *Iliad* XV 119], nay Frenzy and Deceit—which of the worst passions have they not transfigured into the nature and form of a god (τὴν καὶ τί γὰρ οὐχὶ τῶν κακίστων παθῶν εἰς θεοῦ φύσιν καὶ μορφὴν ἀνέπλασαν)?—, and have induced cities to offer sacrifices to the more respectable members of this pantheon. (*Ap.* II 248).

The ineffable form of the Jewish God is placed in sharp contrast with the form of idolatrous statues of the gods. Although Josephus does apply the term “form” to God, it seems to be for polemical, anti-idolatrous reasons that he avoids speaking of God’s εἰκών. As Jervell noted and Levison emphasized, Josephus never uses the concept of God’s image, even not in his retelling of Genesis 1.¹³ In this, he differs from both Philo and Paul. Yet his passage about the ineffable form of God shows that the terminology of form as such is related to that of image, even if the terms are contrasted in this particular context in Josephus’ work. Josephus’ view that no visual image can be made of God because his form surpasses our powers of description shows that, despite the opposition between the true God and idols, the language of form and image is inherently connected. There is talk about the form and image of God, even if the first is beyond description and the possibility of the latter is denied. Josephus’ use of the term “form” seems to be an instance of his metaphorical use of language, similar to the cases in which he speaks of the forms of the visual statues of the gods, such as the second passage from his *Contra Apionem*.

The manner in which the terms of form and image intersect will be explored later, but it is important to stress that they do overlap and are part of the same semantic and conceptual field. This is important because the synonymy (or near-synonymy) or semantic-conceptual closeness of μορφή and εἰκών has become a bone of contention in the scholarly debate about Christology in the Philippian hymn. On the one hand, scholars such as Dunn claim that the phrase ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ is part and parcel of Paul’s Adam Christology, and point to Christ’s being in the image of God. On the other hand, scholars such as Steenburg and Fee strongly contest this synonymy between form and image.¹⁴ The polemics have become heated, Fee making a philippica against those scholars who regard both terms as synonymous:

¹³ J. Jervell, “Imagines und Imago Dei: aus der Genesis-Exegese des Josephus,” in: O. Betz, K. Haacker/M. Hengel (eds), *Josephus-Studien. Untersuchungen zu Josephus, dem antiken Judentum und dem Neuen Testament: Otto Michel zum 70sten Geburtstag gewidmet*, Göttingen 1974, pp. 197-204, esp. 200-204; J.R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism. From Sirach to 2 Baruch*, Sheffield 1988, pp. 101, 109, 147.

¹⁴ See D. Steenburg, “The Case against the Synonymy of *Morphē* and *Eikōn*,” *JSNT* 34 (1988), pp. 77-86 and Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 522-523 and 377-379.

There has been a veritable groundswell in the NT academy that has argued (or more often simply asserted) that Paul's use of μορφή in the opening phrase of the Christ story (v. 6 [=Phil. 2:6]) is virtually synonymous with εἰκών. But ... this is a piece of scholarly mythology that needs to be laid to rest.¹⁵

It is true, I think, that Dunn and others have often emphasized that the terms μορφή and εἰκών are synonymous without ever clearly explaining why. Dunn almost takes the near-synonymy for granted, stating: "it has long been recognized that μορφή and εἰκών are near synonyms," with particular reference to the work of Martin.¹⁶ However, Martin before him also seems to be content with demonstrating that μορφή and εἰκών are interchangeable, without explaining why they belong to the same semantic-conceptual field: "because the terms appear to be used interchangeably in various contexts their meanings are to be regarded as equivalent."¹⁷ No specific background for this statement is given, except for a general reference to the Septuagint. This means the claim that μορφή and εἰκών are near-synonyms lacks precision.

On the other hand, however, it seems unwarranted to emphasize a conceptual difference between the terms to the extent that Fee does. The passage from Josephus' *Contra Apionem* discussed above shows that μορφή and εἰκών belong to the same semantic-conceptual field (*Ap.* II 190-191). This should obviously be noted in the inventory, and in the next section we shall compare Paul's morphic language with that of Philo to establish whether Philo's use of morphic language can throw any light on the issue. Before that, however, we shall continue our survey of morphic passages in Paul.

Morphic language is also important in two other passages in Philippians. These passages also contain the notion of "having the same form, being similar in form" (σύμμορφος) and "being conformed to, taking on the same form as" (συμμορφίζομαι), as encountered already in both Rom. 8:29 and, in reverse form, in Gal. 4:19. In

¹⁵ Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 522-523, esp. 522; cf. pp. 377-379.

¹⁶ Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, pp. 115 and 117; Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, § 8.6, pp. 199-204. Dunn does clearly relate μορφή and εἰκών, see *The Theology of Paul*, pp. 284-285 in §11.4, pp. 281-288 on Phil. 2:6-11; this is also a majority view, see p. 284 n. 83: "the semantic fields of the two terms overlap considerably."

¹⁷ R.P. Martin, *Carmen Christi. Philippians ii.5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship*, Cambridge 1967, pp. 102-120, esp. 118.

Phil. 3:10, Paul expresses his ardent wish "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by taking on the same form as his death (συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ)." This Christ, as Phil. 3:21 explains, "will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may have the same form as the body of his glory (μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself." Together with the passages from Rom. 8:29 and Gal. 4:19, these passages are testimony to the great importance which Paul attaches to the notion of having or taking on the same form as that of Christ. This is indeed a conformity to the form of Christ's εἰκόν, as Rom. 8:29 makes explicit.

The last relevant morphic passage in Paul is Rom. 12:2.¹⁸ Here again, as in 2 Cor. 3:18, Paul mentions the phenomenon of metamorphosis. He exhorts his readers in the following manner: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed (μεταμορφοῦσθε) by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God: what is good and acceptable and perfect"—καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοός, εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον. If the similar passage in 2 Cor. 3:18 is aduced, this metamorphosis appears to be a metamorphosis into the image of God. This link between metamorphosis and image seems to be crucial and is another point for our inventory of problems, since the background of the notion of metamorphosis and its link with the terminology of image is not sufficiently clear.

Dunn, in his comments on metamorphosis in Rom. 12:2, refers to a threefold background of "metamorphosis."¹⁹ (1) First, Dunn points out that the "idea of metamorphosis is common to many religious strands of the ancient world, including the classic myths about the gods changing into earthly form, and accounts of individuals being transformed through mystery ritual or Gnostic release." (2) Sub-

¹⁸ The only morphic passage which I leave out of consideration in this survey is Rom. 2:20. In this passage Paul describes the self-image of his Jewish opponent, who is confident that he is "a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment, the 'bringing into shape' (μόρφωσις) of knowledge and truth (ἔχοντα τὴν μόρφωσιν τῆς γνώσεως καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν τῷ νόμῳ)" (Rom. 2:19-20). This morphic term seems to stand on its own. Cf. for the later Pauline letters, 2 Tim. 3:5.

¹⁹ Dunn, *Romans*, p. 713.

sequently, he specifies that this language ought not to imply "that Paul here is using 'mystery-conceptions,'" as Richard Reitzenstein proposed, but that "the language could be used in the sense of a moral transformation." (3) Finally, Dunn draws upon the idea of metamorphosis in Jewish apocalyptic writings (*1 En.* 104:6; *4 Ezra* 7:97; *2Bar.* 51:5). Surprisingly, Dunn does not consider the possibility that the language of metamorphosis in Paul is strongly related to the semantic-conceptual field of "image," even though the comparable passage of *2 Cor.* 3:18 hints in this direction. The problem is that the background of the notion of metamorphosis in ancient mythology and Jewish apocalyptic is not sufficiently convincing.²⁰ The Jewish apocalyptic sources do perhaps contain the idea of metamorphosis, but hardly the explicit terminology, whereas the specific terminology of metamorphosis in Greek is rather late, with only a limited number of occurrences before the first century CE. As T. Ballauff notes,

Das Wort "Metamorphose" begegnet uns in der griechischen Literatur spät. Die lateinische Sprache hat dafür das Wort "transfiguratio," das zuerst bei Plinius vorkommt; Seneca kennt schon "transfigurari." Die Vorstellung von der Verwandlung göttlicher oder menschlicher Wesen in Tiere, Pflanzen, Steine ist, wie in anderen Ländern, so auch in Griechenland uralt. P. Ovidius Naso ist nicht der erste gewesen, der in Rom Verwandlungssagen poetisch behandelte, sondern die Metamorphose-Dichtung hatte dort längst ihren Einzug genommen.²¹

If we look at Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, for instance, there are indeed some parallels with *2 Cor.* 3:18 which are worth noting. In his account of the creation of man, Ovid stresses both the fact that man is made of the divine substance of the creator or, alternatively, that man is moulded into the form of the gods:

*Natus homo est, sive hunc divino semine fecit
ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo,*

²⁰ See *1 En.* 104:6: "Now fear not, righteous ones, when you see the sinners waxing strong and flourishing"; *4 Ezra* 7:97: "their face is to shine like the sun, and (...) they are to be made like the light of the stars, being incorruptible from then on"; *2 Bar.* 51:5: "those over whom they are exalted now will then be more exalted and glorified than they; (...) both these and those will be changed, these into the splendor of angels and those into startling visions and horrible shapes." Translations of Jewish pseudepigrapha are taken from J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* 1-2, Garden City 1983-1985.

²¹ T. Ballauff, "Metamorphose," *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* 5 (1980), pp. 1177-1179, esp. 1177.

*sive recens tellus seductaque nuper ab alto
aethere cognati retinebat semina caeli.
quam satus Iapeto, mixtam pluvialibus undis,
finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta deorum.*

Then man was born: whether the god who made all else, designing a more perfect world, made man of his own divine substance, or whether the new earth, but lately drawn away from heavenly ether, retained still some elements of its kindred sky—that earth which the son of Iapetus mixed with fresh, running water, and moulded into the form of the all-controlling gods. (I 78-83)

Whereas the view that man is made of the creator's own divine substance comes close to the Jewish creation account of Genesis 1, according to which man was created "in the image of God," the other view that "the son of Iapetus," Prometheus, moulded man from earth into the form of the gods resembles the creation account of Genesis 2. These views are so compatible that, from the third century onwards, the imagery of Prometheus moulding man out of the earth was taken over by Christians and applied to the creation of Adam by God and Christ.²²

Yet the inference which Paul draws from the Jewish creation accounts that man is being reshaped and experiences a transformation into the image of God has virtually no parallel in Ovid's anthropology. First of all, there are alternative, very different anthropologies in Ovid which seem to push aside the anthropology of I 78-83. According to these alternative anthropologies, offspring in "human

²² See the Prometheus-sarcophagus of Rome/Arles (c. 270/280 CE), now in the Louvre, and the biblical sarcophagus of Rome/Arles (c. 325 CE), now in Arles, discussed in J. Engemann, "Nichtchristliche und christliche Ikonographie," in: A. Demandt/J. Engemann (eds), *Konstantin der Grosse: Imperator Caesar Flavius Constantinus—Ausstellungskatalog*, München 2007, pp. 281-294 at pp. 282-283. For Prometheus' creation of mankind, see Aristophanes, *Aves* 686; Plato, *Protagoras* 320d; Philemon, frag. 93 and *Poetae Comici Graecae*—Adespota, frag. 1047; Menander, frag. 508; Heraclides Pontus, frag. 66ab; Callimachus, frag. 493; Herondas II 28; Horace, *Carmina* I 16.13-16; Pausanias, *Description of Greece* X 4.4. For Late Antiquity see H. Kaiser-Minn, *Die Erschaffung des Menschen auf den spätantiken Monumenten des 3. und 4. Jahrhunderts*, Münster 1981; add now *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* XXV.16 (a fourth-century wax tablet with an alphabetic acrostic on Prometheus' creation of mankind); J. Balty/F. Briquel Chatonnet, "Nouvelles mosaïques inscrites d'Osrhoène," *Monuments et Mémoires* 79 (2000), pp. 31-72, esp. 39-41; G. Bowersock, "Notes on the New Edessene Mosaic of Prometheus," *Hyperboreus* 7 (2001), pp. 411-416; this bibliography was kindly provided by my colleague Jan N. Bremmer (Groningen), drawing on his *Greek Religion & Culture. The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Leiden/Boston 2008, p. 33 n. 65.

form" was generated by Mother Earth from the blood of the slain Giants (I 156-160) or human beings evolved from the stones thrown by Deucalion and Pyrrha to produce a new human race after the Flood (I 400-415). These anthropologies in Ovid are in competition with one another. More importantly, however, the notion that human beings experience transformation seems to be limited to particular human beings, such as the emperor, or Heracles, son of a mortal woman and a god. At Heracles' death

... *nec cognoscenda remansit*
Herculis effigies, ne quicquam ab imagine ductum
matris habet, tantumque Iovis vestigia servat.

...
sic ubi mortales Tirynthius exuit artus,
parte sui meliore viget, maiorque videri
coepit et augusta fieri gravitate verendus.

... no shape of Hercules that could be recognized remained, nor was there anything left which he derived from his mother's image. He kept traces only of his father ...; so when the Tirynthian put off his mortal frame, he gained new vigour in his better part, began to seem of more heroic size, and to become awful in his godlike dignity. (IX 263-270)

Apart from Heracles, only the emperor, Julius Caesar, seems to experience a metamorphosis. It is Julius Caesar who is "changed to a new heavenly body, a flaming star" (XV 745; cf. XV 840-851), a fate which still awaits Augustus (XV 868-870).

From this it is clear that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* can render only a partial explanation for the concept of metamorphosis as adopted by Paul. For Ovid, the notion of metamorphosis constitutes a connecting link between various mythological cycles, and is supported by the philosophical or Pythagorean view that the soul "passes into ever-changing bodies" (XV 60-478 at 171-172). It does not sufficiently explain Paul's thoughts about the metamorphosis of Christ-believers into the image of God. What Ovid's *Metamorphoses* do demonstrate, however, is that, in Ovid, too, the terminologies of image and form belong to the same semantic-conceptual field. In III 455-463, for instance, in a vivid description of Narcissus' self-obsession, the terminology switches easily between "forma" and "imago."

The survey of morphic language in Paul leaves a few unresolved issues. First, the concept of metamorphosis in Paul cannot be suf-

ficiently explained from a supposed profusion of this concept in Greco-Roman or Jewish-apocalyptic sources. Second, scholars either claim or deny the near-synonymy of μορφή and εἰκών, especially in the Philippian hymn, but have failed to supply good grounds. Finally, the extent and coherence of Paul's morphic language call for elucidation. All these issues may profit from a comparison between Paul's morphic language and that of Philo, Paul's near-contemporary fellow-Jew, no less Hellenized than Paul. An analysis of morphic language in the latter will show, on the one hand, that the language of μορφή is too diverse to provide clear parallels for Paul's morphic language, but, on the other hand, that it is the specific link between μορφή and εἰκών which may provide a way forward. Perhaps Paul's emphasis on Christ-believers being or becoming similar in form (σύμμορφος) to the image of God will then also become more understandable.

b. *Morphic Language in Philo*

The terminology of form in Philo does not constitute a single, coherent theme, nor is "metamorphosis" a philosophical technical term in his writings. However, it is possible to detect five different applications of morphic language in Philo. In the following, I shall not give an exhaustive survey of all passages, as in Paul, but distinguish between the various applications and illustrate them with the most important examples.

1. *Anthropomorphism*

The broad range of applications of Philo's morphic language becomes clear immediately from the first cluster of passages. Their common theme is the criticism of an anthropomorphic understanding of God. In his commentary on the image of God in Gen. 1:26, Philo warns his readers against interpreting the likeness between God and man wrongly: "Let no one represent the likeness as one to a bodily form; for neither is God in human form (οὔτε γὰρ ἀνθρωπόμορφος ὁ θεός), nor is the human body God-like" (*De opificio mundi* 69). According to Philo, "God is not only not in the form of man, but belongs to no class or kind" (*Legum allegoriae* I 37). A clear polemic is visible in Philo's writings against pagan anthropomorphic concepts of God, which threaten a proper understanding of God. In his com-

mentary on Num. 23:19, "God is not a man," Philo states: "... we think of the blessed and the immortal in terms of our own natures. We shun indeed in words the monstrosity of saying that God is of human form (ὅτι ἀνθρωπόμορφον τὸ θεῖον), but in actual fact we accept the impious thought that He is of human passions" (*De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* 95). In very emphatic terms, Philo turns against anthropomorphic statements about God: "They are utterly monstrous inventions of men who would overthrow great virtues like piety and reverence by representing Him as having the form and passions of mankind" (*De plantatione* 35).²³ The equally despicable opposite of such anthropomorphism is for a human being to claim to possess the form of a particular god, as Gaius Caligula did: "Falsely does he call himself Paeon, let him cease once and for all to mimic the true Paeon, for a form of a god (θεοῦ μορφή) cannot be counterfeited as a coin can be" (*Legatio ad Gaium* 110-111).

There is only one form of anthropomorphism which Philo describes in a positive way, and that is where God reveals himself to human beings in the form of an angel or even in the form of man, the mode in which he appears in particular Old Testament narratives:

To the souls indeed which are incorporeal and are occupied in His worship it is likely that He should reveal Himself as He is, conversing with them as friend with friends; but to souls which are still in a body, giving Himself the likeness of angels, not altering His own nature, for He is unchangeable, but conveying to those which receive the impression of His presence a semblance in a different form, such that they take the image to be not a copy, but that original form itself (ἀλλὰ δόξαν ἐντιθέντα ταῖς φαντασιουμέναις ἑτερόμορφον, ὃ τὴν εἰκόνα οὐ μίμημα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἐκεῖνο εἶδος ὑπολαμβάνειν εἶναι). Indeed an old saying is still current that the deity goes the round of the cities, in the likeness now of this man now of that man, taking note of wrongs and transgressions. (*De somniis* I 232-233, 238)

Interestingly, in support of this anthropomorphic, or rather angelomorphic revelation of God to human beings, Philo clearly alludes to *Odyssey* XVII 485. Similarly, the strangers who visit Abraham are transformed εἰς ἀνθρωπόμορφον ἰδέαν, into anthropomorphic shape

²³ For Philo's criticism of anthropomorphic views on God, see further *De posteritate Caini* 2-4; *Quod deus sit immutabilis* 55-56, 59; *De confusione linguarum* 135; *De congressu eruditionis gratia* 115; *De mutatione nominum* 54-55.

(*De Abrahamo* 113). But for comparison with the notion of metamorphosis in Paul, this is a transformation in the “wrong direction,” from God or angel to man, and for this reason these instances do not provide a useful parallel for Paul’s notion of human beings transforming into the image of God.²⁴

2. *The Forms of the Soul*

A further, different, application of Philo’s morphic language is revealed in his discussion of the forms or forming of the human soul. In one passage Philo refers to the manifold forms and divisions of the soul, in which it is virtually impossible for the divine Spirit to abide (*Quod deus sit immutabilis* 2). In another, he talks about God forming the rational part of the soul: τὸ λογικὸν ἐν ἡμῖν ἐμόρφου (*De fuga et inventione* 68-69). Indeed, in Philo’s view, this forming was in accordance with the divine image: the dominant part of the soul, “the rational spirit-force within us ... was shaped according to the archetypal form of the divine image”—ἐμορφώθη πρὸς ἀρχέτυπον ἰδέαν εἰκόνοσ θείας (*De specialibus legibus* I 171). Yet, despite these similarities, there is no talk in Philo of metamorphosis back into the image of God, so that even this application of morphic language does not throw sufficient light on that of Paul. To be sure, Philo does say something about moulding and forming “the soul into the approved standard, into the form of true goodness itself” (*De specialibus legibus* IV 196), but does not link this with the image of God.

3. *The Forms of the Cosmos*

Philo speaks not only of the forms of the soul, but also, in a cosmological-philosophical way, of the forms of the cosmos. This is not surprising, as this fits Philo’s Platonizing style. In *De specialibus legibus* he clearly conducts a polemic against those who question the validity of Plato’s doctrine of the incorporeal ideas or forms:

Just as anything crushed has lost its quality and form and may be literally said to be nothing more than formless matter (ἄμορφος ὕλη), so the creed which abolishes the Forms confuses everything and reduces it

²⁴ For such transformations, see further *De Abrahamo* 118. For the allegorical figure of nobility taking on human shape, see *De virtutibus* 195. Yet another aspect of Philo’s use of the language of anthropomorphism, which serves to underline the variety of his morphic language, is his description of the bad man as a beast with anthropomorphic features. See *De vita Mosi* I 43; and *De Abrahamo* 32-33.

to the pre-elemental state of existence, that state devoid of form and quality (πρὸς τὴν ... οὐσίαν τὴν ἄμορφον καὶ ἄποιον ἐκείνην). Could anything be more preposterous than this? For when out of that confused matter God produced all things, He did not do so with His own handiwork, since His nature, happy and blessed as it was, forbade that He should touch the limitless chaotic matter. Instead He made full use of the incorporeal potencies well denoted by their name of Forms to enable each kind to take its appropriate form (πρὸς τὸ γένος ἕκαστον τὴν ἀρμόττουσαν λαβεῖν μορφήν). (*De specialibus legibus* I 327-329)

In this way Philo defends Plato's theory of forms, and in several cosmological passages in Philo this language can be seen at work. In *De fuga et inventione* 12, for instance, Philo reflects on the divine Logos, "by which each thing that exists has received its form (μεμόρφωται). Accordingly from the outset form in perfection accompanies the things that come into being, for it is an impress and image (εἰκὼν) of the perfect Logos." Despite the occurrence here of the terminology of form and image, this specific philosophical language does not really help us to understand Paul's reflection on the metamorphosis of human beings into the image of God.²⁵

4. *The Specific Language of Metamorphosis*

The lack of true parallels to Paul's concept of metamorphosis is highlighted by the fact that, in Philo, there is as yet no specific fixed technical terminological meaning of metamorphosis. As noted above, the terminology of metamorphosis in Greek is late, and its occurrence before the first century CE rather limited.

This state of affairs is reflected in Philo's unspecific and vague use of the terminology of metamorphosis. Along the lines of his positive use of anthropomorphism outlined above, Philo speaks about angels who, despite their spiritual substance, often "imitate the forms of men and transform themselves for immediate purposes": πρὸς τὰς ὑποκειμένας χρείας μεταμορφούμενοι (*Quaestiones in Genesim* I 92). However, Philo equally talks about the metamorphosis of Moses into a

²⁵ For morphic language in a cosmological context in Philo, see further also *De somniis* II 45. See also the language of transmutation of the cosmos and its forms, inspired by Euripides' line "Naught that is born doth ever die, | Its severed parts together fly, | And yield another form" (Euripides, frag. 839), in *Legum allegoriae* I 7 and *De aeternitate mundi* 5-6. For the decline of the forms and faculties of mankind throughout this cosmic process, see *De opificio mundi* 140-141 but without any hint at man's reconfiguration through a metamorphosis into the image of God.

prophet (μεταμορφούμενος εἰς προφήτην) when he becomes inspired (*De vita Mosis* I 57); about the undesirable metamorphosis of the works of nature by defiled hand (*Quaestiones in Exodum* 2, frag. 1); about the transformation of piety into either superstition or impiety (*De specialibus legibus* IV 147); and, finally, about Gaius Caligula transforming his figure and dress into Apollo's: εἰς δὲ Ἀπόλλωνα μετεμορφοῦτο καὶ μετασκευάζετο (*Legatio ad Gaium* 95). Such is Philo's usage of the terminology of metamorphosis, and this confirms the impression that neither his morphic language in general, nor his specific usage of metamorphosis, is really parallel to that of Paul. As we shall see, it is rather his everyday, down-to-earth discourse about the "forms of images" which seems to be useful for understanding what is going on in Paul's morphic language.

5. *The Forms of Images*

In a very natural way, Philo repeatedly talks of the forms of images. He speaks of men who employ "sculpture and painting to form innumerable forms (μυρίας γὰρ ὅσας διὰ γραφικῆς καὶ πλαστικῆς μορφώσαντες ιδέας) which they have enclosed in shrines and temples and after building altars have assigned celestial and divine honours to idols of stone and wood and suchlike images, all of them lifeless things" (*De decalogo* 7).²⁶ In most passages such as this, Philo does not use the term εἰκόν for images, but rather ἄγαλμα. Nevertheless, some passages do indeed contain the terminology of both εἰκόν and μορφή. On one occasion in his *Legatio ad Gaium* already quoted earlier, Philo talks about the Jews who "carry (ἄγαλματοφοροῦσι) the images of the commandments (τὰς τῶν διατεταγμένων εἰκόνας) enshrined in their souls. Then as they contemplate their forms thus clearly represented (τύπους καὶ μορφάς) they always think of them with awe" (*Legatio ad Gaium* 210-211).²⁷ In this passage, the terminology of εἰκόν, μορφή and ἄγαλμα clearly intersects, and it does so because of the ordinary manner of speaking about images having forms.

The same occurs in another passage in Philo's *Legatio ad Gaium*, when Philo describes how Gaius Caligula

²⁶ Cf. further *De decalogo* 66 and 72; *De specialibus legibus* II 255-256; *De vita contemplativa* 7.

²⁷ Cf. also *Legatio ad Gaium* 290 and 299.

took possession of the synagogues in the other cities after beginning with those of Alexandria, by filling them with images and statues of himself in bodily form (καταπλήσας εικόνων καὶ ἀνδριάντων τῆς ἰδίας μορφῆς). (*Leg.* 346)

Here, too, images and bodily forms are mentioned in one breath. This common language of the forms of images and statues is present in many authors, as will be demonstrated in the next section. After that, I shall show how this non-philosophical, general morphic language throws light on that of Paul.

c. *The Images and their Forms*

The view that images have forms is attested in many Greek sources, which show that εἰκών and μορφή do indeed belong to the same semantic-conceptual field.²⁸ Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1st cent. BCE), for instance, gives a description of the procession of a Roman festival in which images appear to have μορφαί:

Last of all in the procession came the images of the gods (αἱ τῶν θεῶν εἰκόνες), borne on men's shoulders (ἐπόμενον ὅμοις ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν φερόμεναι), showing the same likenesses (μορφὰς θ' ὁμοίας) as those made by the Greeks and having the same dress, the same symbols, and the same gifts which tradition says each of them invented and bestowed on mankind. (Dionysius Halicarnassensis, *Antiquitates Romanae* VII 72.13)

We may note in passing that the idea of the images being “borne on men's shoulders” again emphasizes the observation above that Paul's talk of “bearing the image” of the earthly and heavenly man in 1 Cor. 15:49 has its background in the pagan practices of carrying around statues of the gods. However, what is key here is that these images of the gods are said to possess forms (μορφάς).

²⁸ For that reason I strongly disagree with Fee, *Pauline Christology*, p. 378, who claims, on the basis of J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan's *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, London 1930: “Μορφή (...) denotes ‘form’ or ‘shape’ not usually in terms of the external features by which something is recognized but of those characteristics and qualities that are essential to it. Hence, it means *that which truly characterizes a given reality*.” Cf. also 379 n. 29: “The improbability of genuine semantic overlap can especially be seen in the fact that the two words εἰκών and μορφή never occur together in the several entries for each in Louw and Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*.” However, it would be better practice to decide the question of their synonymy or semantic-conceptual overlap on the basis of the Online Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Digital Library (TLG®).

This is also apparent from several passages in Plutarch. In *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute*, Plutarch describes the proposal of Stasicrates, the master-sculptor, to cut out Alexander's image in Mount Athos, which has an almost human form:

"But I, your majesty," said he, "have conceived the project of placing your likeness in living and imperishable material, with roots that are everlasting and weight immovable and unshakable. For Mount Athos in Thrace, in that part where is its highest and most conspicuous summit, has well-proportioned surfaces and heights, limbs and joints and proportions that suggest the human form (μορφοειδῆ). When it has been properly carved and worked into shape (σχηματισθείς), it can be called Alexander's image (εἰκών), and Alexander's statue it will be." (*De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute* 335C-D; cf. Lucianus, *Pro imaginibus* 9)

In another passage, Plutarch uses the phrase "image of the form" when he remarks that the Spartan king Agesilaus did not leave behind any statue or picture of himself:

We have no image of the form [of him] (τῆς δὲ μορφῆς εἰκόνα μὲν οὐκ ἔχομεν), for he himself would not consent to one, and even when he lay dying forbade the making of "either statue or picture" of his person, but he is said to have been a little man of unimposing presence. (*Agesilaus* 2.2)

In this case, "form" does not refer to the form of the image itself, but to the form of the person whom it represents. Normally, however, "form" would refer first and foremost to the forms of the image.

The terms "image" and "form" concur not only in pagan Greek writings,²⁹ but also in Jewish writings,³⁰ and in a plethora of early-Christian sources.³¹ Among the Jewish sources, there is a very telling example in book III of the *Sibylline Oracles*, in which the

²⁹ For other examples of the concurrence of "image" and "form," see: Aristotle, *Politica* 1340a 25; Aristotle, *Poetica* 1448b 11; Plutarch, frag. 158 (ed. Sandbach); Lucian, *Adversus indoctum et libros multos ementem* 21; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Aristotelis metaphysica commentaria* 417; Julian, *Eis τὸν βασιλέα Ἡλίου πρὸς Σαλούστιον* 8 (134C); *id.*, *Epistulae* 59 (ed. Bidez-Cumont = Wright [Loeb] 48, 443B).

³⁰ Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 210-211 and 346, already discussed above; Josephus, *Ant.* VI 333 and, already referred to above, *Ap.* II 190-191.

³¹ See, e.g., *Or. Sib.* VIII 378-379; *Acta Joannis* 28; Justin Martyr, *Apologia* 63.16 and 64.5; Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* I 1.15; 8.1; 16.3; Ps-Clement, *Homiliae* XI 5.1; Origen, *Commentariorum series in evangelium Matthaei* 161; *Corpus Hermeticum*, *Poimandres* 12; Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium* V 16.10; VI 14.5; 20.1; 42.6.

terminology of image and form is bound up with an allusion to the passage on the image of God in Gen. 1:26-27. In this instance the readers are addressed as follows:

Men, who have the form which God moulded in his image
(ἄνθρωποι θεόπλαστον ἔχοντες ἐν εἰκόνι μορφῇν)
why do you wander in vain, and not walk the straight path
ever mindful of the immortal creator? (III 8-10)

The phrase “having the form which God moulded in his image” clearly shows that “form” and “image” belong to the same semantic-conceptual field.

I finish with a very striking example from Celsus, which demonstrates that, from his pagan perspective, Celsus could easily draw the language of God’s image from Gen. 1:26 into the ordinary parlance of images which are endowed with forms. In this passage, which has come down to us through Origen, Celsus criticizes the Christians because

they cannot bear to see temples and altars and images (οὐκ ἀνέχονται νεῶς ὁρῶντες καὶ βωμοὺς καὶ ἀγάλματα). ... they openly dishonour the images. If what they mean is that an image of stone or wood or bronze or gold which some man or other has wrought cannot be a god, their wisdom is ludicrous. Who but an utter infant imagines that these things are gods and not votive offerings and images of gods? But if they mean that we ought not to suppose that images are divine (εἰ δ’ ὅτι μηδὲ θείας εἰκόνας ὑποληπτέον), because God has a different form (ἄλλην γὰρ εἶναι θεοῦ μορφῇν), as the Persians also maintain [cf. *Contra Celsum* VII 62: Herodotus II 131], they [i.e. the Christians] have unwittingly refuted themselves. For they say that “God made man his own image” («ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησε τὸν ἄνθρωπον» ἰδίαν «εἰκόνα») and made man’s form like his own (τὸ δὲ εἶδος ὁμοιον ἑαυτῷ). (Celsus apud Origen, *Contra Celsum* VII 62 trans. Chadwick; cf. VI 63).

As in the passage from Josephus’ *Contra Apionem* quoted earlier (see § 2a above), the images of the gods are contrasted with the form of God, which is different from the forms of these images. Here, too, the forms are those which belong to images. It is within this common sense of images and their forms that Celsus also understands the Greek wording of Gen. 1:26-27 and, for this reason, believes that the Christians contradict themselves. If the form of God is different from the forms of the images of the gods, then the Christians refute

themselves by holding that God made man in his own image and form.

Later on in his *Contra Celsum*, Origen answers Celsus' criticism in exactly the same language of image and form. According to Origen,

we [i.e. the Christians] do not suppose that the images are divine likenesses (ἀλλ' οὐδὲ θείας εἰκόνας ὑπολαμβάνομεν εἶναι τὰ ἀγάλματα) because we do not depict in any form a God who is invisible and incorporeal (ἄτε μορφήν ἀοράτου καὶ ἀσωμάτου μὴ διαγράφοντες θεοῦ). But Celsus supposes that we fall into contradicting ourselves when we say that God does not possess human form and when we believe that God made man His own image and made him in the image of God. My reply to this, as I also said earlier [VI 63], is that the part which is "in the image of God" is to be found preserved in the rational soul which has the capacity for virtue. And yet Celsus, failing to see the difference between God's image and that which is made *after* the image of God, says that we affirm "God made man his own image and made man's form like his own." To this we replied earlier. (*Contra Celsum* VII 66)

Celsus' attack and Origen's reply show that, in a very natural, fluid way, both pagans and Christians share the same language of images and their forms, even when talking about the image of God.

3. *Concluding Observations*

The parallels for Paul's morphic language do not seem to lie in philosophical reflections on forms, whether the forms of the soul, or the forms of Plato's theory. Nor is the Greek concept of metamorphosis sufficient to explain Paul's notion of transformation into the image of God. It seems, rather, that it is the commonplace, daily understanding of images being endowed with forms which can throw light upon the three problematic issues identified in the inventory of Paul's morphic language: (a) the issue of the "form of God," (b) the issue of transformation, and, finally, (c) the issue of the coherence of Paul's morphic language in general. In each case, as I shall briefly argue, the conventional manner of speaking about images and their forms seems to furnish the appropriate background.

a. "Being in the Form of God"

Against the background of the common idiom of the forms of images, the depiction of Christ as the one $\delta\varsigma \epsilon\nu \mu\omicron\rho\phi\eta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon \ \upsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omega\nu$, "who was in the form of God" (Phil. 2:6) can have two meanings.

(1) First, indeed, as Dunn believes, "form" here could be the form of the image of God. This meaning is best illustrated by the rendition of Gen. 1:26-27 in *Sib. Or.* III 8, already quoted: "Men, who have the form which God moulded in his image ($\acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\iota \ \theta\epsilon\omicron\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\tau\omicron\nu \ \epsilon\chi\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma \ \epsilon\nu \ \epsilon\iota\kappa\omicron\nu\iota \ \mu\omicron\rho\phi\eta\nu$)." In this sense, Fee's distinction between "form" and "image" runs contrary to the way in which (the combination of) these terms would have been commonly understood in Antiquity.

This, however, in no way decides the matter of whether this Adam Christology in Phil. 2:6 applies only to Christ's post-incarnational, earthly existence, as Dunn believes, or also to his pre-existence. I am inclined to think that acknowledging that Adam Christology is present in Phil. 2:6 does not preclude the possibility that this passage refers to the pre-existent Christ. After all, Adam II in 1 Corinthians 15 is the $\acute{o} \ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma \ \epsilon\kappa \ \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon$, the man *from* heaven (15:47), which seems to imply that Paul took this heavenly man as pre-existent. In this case, the phrase $\delta\varsigma \epsilon\nu \mu\omicron\rho\phi\eta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon \ \upsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omega\nu$ (Phil. 2:6) is synonymous with the phrase $\delta\varsigma \ \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu \ \epsilon\iota\kappa\omicron\nu \ \tau\omicron\upsilon \ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ in 2 Cor. 4:4. I do not regard it as compelling that the latter phrase should only apply to Christ on the basis of his earthly life (*pace* Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 519-520).³² As in Col. 1:15, this phrase could well refer to the pre-existent state of the man from heaven. This view that Adam II, in his capacity as the heavenly man, was pre-existent also accords very well with Philo's thoughts about the heavenly man, who is created after the image of God and precedes the earthly man.³³ In Philo, however, the heavenly man, being created *after* the image of

³² Cf. Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 522-523: "Paul uses this language [the language of $\epsilon\iota\kappa\omicron\nu$] with regard to Christ *only* with regard to his being the divine image-bearer in his incarnation, not with regard to his preexistence."

³³ See G.H. van Kooten, "The Two Types of Man in Philo of Alexandria and Paul of Tarsus: The Anthropological Trichotomy of Spirit, Soul and Body," in: Ch. Jedan/L. Jansen (eds), *Philosophische Anthropologie in der Antike*, Frankfurt etc. 2008; an abridged version, entitled "The Anthropological Trichotomy of Spirit, Soul and Body in Philo of Alexandria and Paul of Tarsus," is published in: M. Labahn/O. Lehtipuu (eds), *Anthropology in Context. Studies on Anthropological Ideas within the New Testament and its Ancient Context*, Louvain 2008.

God, is distinct from the image, which is identical with the Logos, the second God. Here the hierarchy thus runs as follows (from the top down): (i) God, (ii) Image = Logos, and (iii) heavenly man, created *after* the image. In Paul, however, the heavenly man and the image seem to coincide, and for this reason Paul can speak of “bearing the image of the heavenly man” (1 Cor. 15:49).

(2) Secondly, however, it could also be the case that the term μορφή θεοῦ in the phrase ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων does not point to the image of God, but refers to the form of God in precisely the same way as we have seen it used in Josephus and Celsus. According to Josephus, God’s “form and magnitude surpass our powers of description (μορφήν δὲ καὶ μέγεθος ἡμῖν ἄφατος). No materials, however costly, are fit to make an image of Him (πᾶσα μὲν ὕλη πρὸς εἰκόνα τὴν τούτου κἂν ἢ πολυτελὴς ἄτιμος)” (*Ap.* II 190-191). And according to Celsus, the Christians “mean that we ought not to suppose that images are divine (εἰ δ’ ὅτι μηδὲ θείας εἰκόνας ὑποληπτέον), because God has a different form (ἄλλην γὰρ εἶναι θεοῦ μορφήν), as the Persians also maintain” (Celsus *apud* Origen, *Contra Celsum* VII 62). Here too, however, I would contend, the language of God’s form is occasioned by an explicit contrast between the form of God and the images of the gods, so that the same semantic-conceptual field of images and their forms is still at work. It is true, as Fee suggests, that in this case the “form of God” in Phil. 2:6 takes on the meaning of his divinity, so that the pre-existent Christ is said to share in God’s form of divinity.³⁴ But that again, I believe, is not so very different from the language of being the image of God. However one understands Phil. 2:6, the essential fact remains that this passage is part of Paul’s Adam Christology, although the emphasis here seems to be on the pre-existent Adam from heaven.

b. *Metamorphosis*

As we have seen, one specific component of Paul’s morphic language, the notion of metamorphosis into God’s image, is only insufficiently explained by the background of Greek mythology and philosophy. The terminology of metamorphosis is late, with only a limited number of occurrences before the first century CE. As a

³⁴ Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 376-381.

survey of the few instances of this term in Philo shows, metamorphosis had not acquired a specific technical meaning for Philo. Nor is the notion of metamorphosis in Jewish apocalyptic texts fully parallel. The best way to understand metamorphosis in Paul is to regard it as a natural part of Paul's reflections on the image of God. As images and their forms are part of a common, everyday idiom in the Greek world, Paul's application of metamorphosis does not derive from a fixed concept, but rather evolves naturally from his focus on the image of God.

As I have sought to demonstrate elsewhere, the view that, by way of metamorphosis into the image of God, the Christ-believer is conformed more and more to the divine image does have an analogy in the Platonic ideal of becoming as much like God as possible (see, e.g., Plato, *Theaetetus* 176B); this progressive conformation seems to be without parallel in ancient Jewish thought. I would emphasize, however, that the terminology of metamorphosis is best understood as a natural consequence of the important place which Paul accords to the language of the image of God. In 2 Cor. 3:18 we have the full, explicit expression of Paul's idea of the metamorphosis into the image of God; this transforming process—as 2 Cor. 4:16 explains—takes place in the “inner man.” In Rom. 12:2, Paul highlights that this metamorphosis comes to pass through the renewal of the mind (νοῦς), which—as is apparent from Rom. 7:22–25—is synonymous with the “inner man.” Although the term “image” is not repeated in Romans 12, it is presupposed, since already in Rom. 8:29 Paul refers to the process of taking on the same form as Christ's image. Both passages, 2 Corinthians 3 and Romans 12, are based on the logic of transforming into God's image.

c. The Extent and Coherence of Paul's Morphic Language

If indeed Paul's morphic language is rooted in his reflections on the image of God, it is also reversely the case that the full extent of Paul's conception of the image of God becomes visible in his morphic language. As we have seen, in the common idiom of images and their forms, “form” refers either to the form of the image itself, or to the form which the image represents. Both meanings are possible and depend upon the context. Similarly, Paul's morphic language is equally ambiguous. His notion of metamorphosis into the image of

God refers both to the form inherent in the divine image and to the form which the subject takes on as its own. This ambiguity is nicely captured in the compound terms σύμμορφος (“having the same form, similar in form”) and συμμορφίζομαι (“be conformed to, take on the same form as”); in Greek they occur almost exclusively in Paul and in literature dependent upon him,³⁵ and—as we can deduce from our survey—constitute the most frequent expression of Paul’s morphic language (Phil. 3:10, 21; Rom. 8:29). If man takes on the same form as Christ, Christ can reciprocally also be said to take form within man: μορφωθῇ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν (Gal. 4:19). It cannot be otherwise than that this process has something to do with the dynamics of Christ’s alternation between ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων (Phil. 2:6) and μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν (2:7-8), and back (2:9-11). This metamorphosis of Christ now seems to be mirrored in the metamorphosis of Christ-believers into the image of God (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2). Paul’s morphic language is remarkably coherent and extensive. Whereas the terminology of form in Philo does not constitute a single, coherent theme but has rather diverse applications, in Paul it seems to support one of the central tenets of his theology—his Adam Christology and, more precisely, his reflections on the image of God.

³⁵ The main exceptions among the more than 700 occurrences in the extant Greek literature are Nicander, *Theriaca* 321; Heraclitus, *Allegoriae* 77.3; and Pseudo-Lucian, *Amores* 39.

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ATTITUDES TO THE SABBATH
IN THREE APOSTOLIC FATHERS:
DIDACHE, IGNATIUS, AND BARNABAS

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On the 6th of February 2006,¹ on the occasion of the 431st *dies natalis* of Leiden University, Prof. Henk Jan de Jonge gave a lecture in Leiden's austere Pieterskerk, entitled "Sunday and Sabbath. On the birth of Christian Sunday."² In his lecture, Prof. De Jonge dealt with the complicated question of how it is that, since the first half of the first century CE, members of Christian communities have chosen Sunday as the day on which to gather and partake of a common meal. According to De Jonge, the choice for Sunday was dictated by practical reasons. The Jews who joined the movement of Jesus-believers were led to institute a new common meal on Sunday evening, in addition to their traditional Sabbath evening meal, because they felt the need to affirm and consolidate their specifically Christian identity. Sunday, the first day of the Jewish week, was the first possibility available to Jewish-Christians for their weekly gatherings. A certain competition arose between the traditional familiar gathering on Sabbath and the common meal on Sunday evening, which would eventually become more important than the seventh day in the Christian liturgical calendar. While listening to Prof. De Jonge's lecture, I thought of several passages against the observance of the Sabbath in the Early Christian anti-Jewish literature which I was at that time studying. Several questions sprang to mind: how long did Christians continue observing the Sabbath? How far back does the polemic against the Sabbath go? What role did this polemic play in the separation of Christianity from Judaism? By inviting me to contribute to this *Festschrift*, the editors gave me the chance to work out these questions and to provide some answers. But, above all, they offered

¹ The research for this article is subsidized by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

² H.J. de Jonge, *Zondag en sabbat. Over het ontstaan van de christelijke zondag*, Leiden 2006.

the occasion to pay a modest homage to Prof. De Jonge, to whom I am very grateful for directing my PhD thesis.

1. *Discussions about Sabbath in the First Century CE*

The calendar is a fundamental element of identity for every religious community.³ In Judaism, the Sabbath is a hugely important institution because it organizes human time by ritual repetition and gives it a symbolic value. The fact that the Sabbath commandment is included in the Decalogue assures its privileged position in the Jewish religious system. It has a commemorative function because it remembers God's rest after creating the world: by weekly observing the Sabbath rest, Jews remember the creation, structure their time, and order their lives in harmony with God's activity.⁴ In antiquity, the Sabbath was one of the main Jewish identity markers together with Abrahamic descent, circumcision, feasts, dietary laws and purity rules. Because Jews, on the Sabbath, acted differently from all their neighbours in the cities of the Roman Empire, Gentiles also perceived the seventh day as a social boundary marker of Judaism.⁵ In the first century CE, all the groups related to Judaism kept the Sabbath, but their attitudes varied concerning *how* to keep it. Disagreements arose because the Torah gives only a few details about Sabbath observance. Hence the large number of halachic discussions on the Sabbath, in which more rigid attitudes to the prohibition of work on the Sabbath coexisted with more flexible positions that admitted exceptions to the rule. Jesus-believers were also involved in this debate, evidence of which can be found in the Gospels and in other New Testament writings. Nevertheless, the fact that there were these discussions about the Sabbath halacha does not mean that the validity or observance of the Sabbath were questioned by the different Jewish groups in the first century CE.

³ On the significance of the calendar in constructing religious identity, see G.F. Sproul, "Sacred Time," in: M. Eliade (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion* 12, London 1987, pp. 535-544.

⁴ H. Weiss, *A Day of Gladness. The Sabbath among Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, Columbia 2003, pp. 1-2.

⁵ See, for instance, Persius, *Sat.* V 184.

People discussed the Sabbath not only in its juridical aspect, but also at a theological level. For some Jewish groups during the Greco-Roman period the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant between God and his people, as well as a sign of distinction and separation from other peoples (see, for instance *Jub.* 2:19, 31-32). On the other side, Philo and Josephus insist on the universal significance of the Sabbath and on its validity for humankind. The eschatological interpretations of the Sabbath, based on a messianic exegesis of the Scripture and giving to the seventh day a cosmic transcendence, were also of great importance. These two aspects, legal and theological, are the main issues in the polemics between Pharisees and Jesus-believers on the one hand, and between Gentile-Christians and Jewish-Christians inside the Christian communities on the other hand.

When one speaks of the origin of the Jewish-Christian conflicts, it is necessary to distinguish, as does C. Mimouni, between polemic and controversy. We can define "polemic" as a conflict between two groups considering themselves as part of the same religious system, whereas by the term "controversy" we mean a conflict against an external enemy belonging to a distinct entity.⁶ If we accept this distinction, debate about the Sabbath by Christians in the first and early second centuries CE has to be understood as both polemic and as anti-Jewish controversy, because until 135 CE, i.e. before the second Jewish revolt, the Jesus-believers' movement was still developing *inside* Judaism. Until this period, conflicts were essentially infra-Jewish and infra-Christian. Within Christian communities, the situation was even more complicated because of the presence of members of Gentile origin. An increasingly profound dissent arose between, on the one side, Jewish-Christians who favoured the observances and, on the other side, Gentile-Christians and Jewish-Christians who were against Jewish Law. In the different phases of this polemic, Christians hostile to the Law developed a series of arguments against their opponents, which would subsequently be adopted by Christian authors as anti-Jewish arguments later on in the second century (when the separation between Judaism and Christianity was definitely sanctioned).

⁶ C. Mimouni, "Pour une histoire de la séparation entre les communautés 'chrétiennes' et les communautés 'pharisiennes' (ca. 70-135 de notre ère)," in: T.L. Hettema/A. van der Kooij (eds), *Religious Polemics in Context*, Assen 2004, pp. 303-329.

Therefore, studying the polemic against the observances in Christian literature of the late first and early second centuries allows us to grasp the importance of ritual and the liturgical organization of human time for a religious system engaged in constructing its own identity.

2. Sources

All these aspects have to be taken into consideration when one analyzes the different attitudes to the Sabbath among the Jesus-believers communities around the end of the first century CE. Since dispute over the Sabbath in the Gospels and in Paul has been studied extensively, it is not my purpose to discuss it again. Instead, I intend to analyze the attitudes to the Sabbath in three non-canonical writings that are included in the corpus of the Apostolic Fathers: the *Didache*, the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, and the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Although "Apostolic Fathers" is a modern category, it is nevertheless interesting to note that these three works, together with the first and the second letters of Clement, were copied in a manuscript from the eleventh century (*Hierosolymitanus* 54). This collection dates back to the fifth century and demonstrates that Christians from that period assigned a certain unity to these writings excluded from the New Testament canon. But there is another, more important reason to consider these writings together, namely the fact that they are almost contemporary (in any case before 135 CE) and come from the same geographical area, i.e. Western Syria, in particular Antioch and its surroundings. This circumstance is significant because the Church of Antioch played a fundamental role in the making of Christianity. In fact, it was in this city precisely that the Jesus-believers' movement had to face the problem of Gentiles who sought admission to the Christian community. The decision taken by the community in Antioch to accept Gentiles among Jesus-believers without demanding that they first become Jewish proselytes, crucially influenced the history of Christianity and its relation with Judaism.⁷ We know from the New Testament that the positions on this issue diverged among

⁷ Cf. M. Slee, *The Church in Antioch in the First Century CE. Communion and Conflict*, Sheffield 2003.

the leaders of the Christian movement, leading to the conflict narrated in Acts 15 and Gal. 2:11-14. Despite the efforts of the so-called 'Jerusalem conference' to find a solution to the conflict, the solution adopted on this occasion did not fully resolve the problem raised by the presence of Gentiles in the Church. The Didachist, Ignatius and Ps.-Barnabas all deal with this question and propose different solutions. Let us examine their attitude toward the Sabbath.

a. *The Didache*

The *Didache* has to be considered as a Jewish-Christian text intended for a Gentile-Christian readership. The longer form of the title "Teaching of the Lord transmitted by the Twelve Apostles to the Nations" (a possible allusion to Matt. 28:19-20) explicitly asserts that the addressees were Christians of pagan origin.⁸ The *Didache* is supposed to have been given its actual literary form at the beginning of the first century in Western Syria, probably in the same milieu as Matthew's Gospel. It is divided into three main parts: an instruction concerning the Doctrine of the two ways (1-6), a liturgical instruction (7-10) and a series of doctrinarian rules (11-16).

In its first part the Didachist mentions only a few commandments of the Decalogue, specifically the negative commandments, and therefore the commandment concerning the Sabbath is not included. The commandment to keep the seventh day is not explicitly mentioned in the other parts of the *Didache* either. For some scholars, the silence of the *Didache* on Sabbath observance has to be related to the lack of other typically Jewish identity markers in this text, such as circumcision and dietary laws. Aaron Milavec⁹ infers that the Christians of pagan origin, to whom the Didachist addressed himself, were asked to carry out a moral conversion and not to observe the entire Jewish law. But Milavec's conclusion, that Sabbath rest was suppressed in the community to which the Didachist belonged, seems to me too hasty. The fact that the text does not mention any ritual practice does not necessarily imply that it was not performed by the author's community. In this connection, I would like to stress that

⁸ C. Mimouni, *Le judéo-christianisme ancien. Essais historiques*, Paris 1998, p. 194.

⁹ See A. Milavec, *The Didache. Faith, Hope, and Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.*, New York 2003.

several Jewish writings from the Hellenistic period also fail to mention circumcision, dietary laws, the calendar or the Sabbath, but this does not mean that the Jewish communities which produced these writings renounced these traditional religious practices. One only has to think of the *Testament of Abraham*, the *Letter of Aristeeas*, and *4 Maccabees*: none of these manifest any interest in the Sabbath. In fact, these texts display different strategies for marking identity boundaries. Among these, the texts aimed at outsiders prefer to insist on other patterns of identity, such as common human behaviour, rather than on specific observances. It is therefore likely that, in the case of the *Didache*, its author chose a similar strategy to address those Gentiles who wanted to join the Christian movement. The rules expounded in the Doctrine of the two ways are the *conditio sine qua non* which the non-Jewish Christians had to respect if they wanted to be accepted into the community. But for the Didachist the ideal believer submits to the complete observance of the Law: "For if you can bear the entire yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect; but if you cannot, do as much as you can" (6:2: εἰ μὲν γὰρ δύνασαι βαστάσαι ὅλον τὸν ζυγὸν τοῦ κυρίου, τέλειος ἔσῃ· εἰ δ' οὐ δύνασαι, ὁ δύνῃ, τοῦτο ποίει).¹⁰ It is very unlikely that "the entire yoke of the Lord" did not include Sabbath, one of the central pillars of life under the covenant.

The *Didache* reflects the debate on the observances and on the question of how many of them were not negotiable. The Didachist opposes the position of those whom he calls "hypocrites." His position is similar to that of Matthew's when he takes issue with the hypocrites (the Scribes and Pharisees) about certain Jewish practices: alms, prayer, fasting (Matt. 5:17-20; 6:1-6, 16-18; 15:1-11; 22:18; 23:16-23). It is worth noting that Matthew's polemics against the hypocrites never deal with the Sabbath, dietary laws or circumcision. Similarly, the issues that separate the Didachist from the hypocrites are fasting days and the wording of prayer. Scholars have sometimes identified the "hypocrites" in the *Didache* with the Pharisees, sometimes with the Jewish-Christians. If we accept the latter interpretation, we can compare the "hypocrites" in the *Didache* with the

¹⁰ The translations of the *Didache*, the letters of Ignatius and the *Epistle of Barnabas* are drawn from B. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Cambridge MA 2003.

"hypocrites" in Gal. 2:13, i.e. with those who would compel Christians to live according to Judaism (ιουδαΐζειν). However that may be, it is clear that the Didachist's community was intent on defining its identity in opposition to another group.

One of the ways adopted by the Didachist to distinguish his community from the "hypocrites" was by reorganizing ritual time. He started with the fasting days: "Do not keep your fasts with the hypocrites. For they fast on Monday [the second day] and Thursday [the fifth day]; but you should fast on Wednesday [the fourth day] and Friday" (8:1: Αἱ δὲ νηστεῖαι ὑμῶν μὴ ἕστωσαν μετὰ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν· νηστεύουσι γὰρ δευτέρῃ σαββάτων καὶ πέμπτῃ· ὑμεῖς δὲ νηστεύσατε τετράδῃ καὶ παρασκευῇ). This prescription does not impose a new kind of fasting (which was a traditional Jewish practice), but simply establishes different days for fasting. "This is not just some invisible difference—a different intention, or a distinct attitude of mind and heart—but a concrete separation in the way they [the community of the Didachist] collectively organize their week. They are visibly bound together in being, as a group, out of phase with the others."¹¹ The reason why the Didachist fixes the fourth day and the Friday is not explicitly mentioned, but Audet thinks that fasting on Friday was a deliberate mockery of the Sabbath during which fasting was forbidden by the rabbis (*m. Taan.* 4:2). However, this hypothesis lacks convincing arguments. The fact that the Didachist calls the days of the week the "second day of Sabbath," the "fourth day of Sabbath" etc., indicates that the Sabbath is still the day around which the author and his community organize their time. Some scholars have suggested that the change of the fasting days was due to a reassessment of the Christian week, which now revolved around Sunday rather than the Sabbath, but this seems to me unlikely. If this were the case, the Didachist should have imposed fasting on Friday and Tuesday, that is, two days before and two days after Sunday, maintaining the same lapse of time which separates Monday and Thursday from the Sabbath. Instead, he chose Wednesday and Friday. According to *Didascalia* 21 and *Apostolic Constitutions* 7:23 there was a comme-

¹¹ T. O'Loughlin, "The *Didache* as a Source for Picturing the Earliest Christian Communities: the Case of the Practice of Fasting," in: K.J. O'Mahony (ed.), *Christian Origins. Worship, Belief and Society*, Sheffield 2003, pp. 83-112, esp. 92.

morative purpose behind this choice: Tuesday was a commemoration of Jesus' trial, while Friday was a commemoration of Jesus' death.¹² In her famous book *La date de la cène. Calendrier biblique et liturgie chrétienne*, Annie Jaubert considers that by taking Wednesday and Friday as liturgical days Christians followed an ancient sacerdotal calendar in opposition to the official Jewish calendar.¹³ Thus, by reorganizing the fasting days, they restored an older tradition.

Just as the Didachist instructs his followers not to fast with the hypocrites, he enjoins them to pray in a different manner and at different times from the hypocrites. In chapter 14 he orders believers to gather together on the Lord's day in order to break bread and give thanks, having first confessed their unlawful deeds so that their sacrifice might be pure (14:1: Καθ' ἡμέραν δὲ κυρίου συναχθέντες κλάσατε ἄρτον καὶ εὐχαριστήσατε, προεξομολογησάμενοι τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν, ὅπως καθαρὰ ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν ᾗ). According to David Flusser the insistence on the Lord's day as the day of the Eucharist may be polemically directed against those who preferred to celebrate the Eucharist on the Sabbath.¹⁴ However, there is no passage in the *Didache* that would seem to suggest such an opposition between Sabbath and Sunday. The logic of substitution, which would prevail in the second century, is still unknown to the Didachist and his milieu. He simply tries to combine traditional practices with new practices of self-identity specific to his community.

b. *Ignatius of Antioch*

According to C. Mimouni, the conflict over the observances and the interpretation of the Scripture was still alive within the Christian movement during the lifetime of Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch.¹⁵ The novelty of Ignatius' position consists in trying to establish principles for the distinction, not between Judaism and Christianity, but between Jewish-Christianity and Gentile-Christianity. Mimouni is

¹² Cf. R. Beckwith, *Calendar, Chronology and Worship. Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, Leiden 2005, p. 215.

¹³ A. Jaubert, *La date de la cène. Calendrier biblique et liturgie chrétienne*, Paris 1957, pp. 60-75.

¹⁴ H. van de Sandt/D. Flusser, *The Didache. Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*, Assen 2002, p. 352.

¹⁵ Mimouni, "Pour une histoire de la séparation."

certainly right, because for Ignatius the main problem is how should Gentile-Christians relate to Judaism. Nevertheless, as distinct from Paul, the Didachist and Ps.-Barnabas, who all dealt with this problem from a viewpoint within Judaism, Ignatius seems to assume an external perspective. It is not by chance that the word "Christianity" is found for the first time in Ignatius, namely in his *Letter to the Magnesians*: "For this reason, since we are his disciples, let us learn to live according to Christianity. For whoever is called by a name other than this does not belong to God" (*Magn.* 10:1: Διὰ τοῦτο, μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ γενόμενοι, μάθωμεν κατὰ χριστιανισμόν ζῆν. Ὃς γὰρ ἄλλῳ ὀνόματι καλεῖται πλέον τούτου, οὐκ ἔστιν τοῦ θεοῦ). The creation of the term χριστιανισμός is in itself a step towards the separation from Judaism. We can compare the coining of this term with the invention of the term Judaism during the Maccabean period, another moment of great tension between two different religious and cultural systems.

Ignatius presents Judaism and Christianity as though they were incompatible: "It is outlandish to proclaim Jesus Christ and practice Judaism. For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity—in which every tongue that believes in God has been gathered together" (*Magn.* 10:3: Ἀτοπὸν ἔστιν, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν λαλεῖν καὶ ἰουδαῖζειν. Ὁ γὰρ Χριστιανισμὸς οὐκ εἰς Ἰουδαϊσμόν ἐπίστευσεν, ἀλλ' Ἰουδαϊσμός εἰς Χριστιανισμόν, εἰς ὃν πᾶσα γλῶσσα πιστεύσασα εἰς θεὸν συνήχθη). ἰουδαῖζειν refers, of course, to non-Jews who follow Jewish customs. To fight against this tendency means for Ignatius to strengthen the separation of his own community—that is the Christians of pagan origin—from the "Judaism" of the Jewish-Christians. Ignatius is the first Christian author after Paul who uses ἰουδαῖζειν. This verb generally means "living according to Judaism," but in the context of the *Letter to the Magnesians*, it probably concerns more specifically the day in which people celebrate the Lord's day, i.e. Sabbath. The compiler of the longer recension of Ignatius' letters, who is also his first exegete, already interpreted *Magn.* 9 as a reference to Sabbath observance. Ignatius states that it is impossible for Gentile-Christians to follow Jewish practices, namely to keep the Sabbath rather than Sunday: "And so those who lived according to the old ways came to a new hope, no longer keeping the Sabbath but living according to the Lord's day, on which also our life arose through him and his death—which some

deny" (*Magn.* 9:1: Εἰ οὖν οἱ ἐν παλαιοῖς πράγμασιν ἀναστραφέντες εἰς καινότητα ἐλπίδος ἦλθον, μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ κυριακὴν ζῶντες, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν ἀνέτειλεν δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, ὃ τινες ἀρνοῦνται).¹⁶ The opposition, indeed the incompatibility, between the two religious systems of Judaism and Christianity is symbolized in the contrast between the two liturgical moments, the Sabbath and Sunday.

According to Schoedel, Ignatius overemphasises the issue of the Sabbath, which he takes as a point of departure in order to illustrate the unacceptability of Judaism. By linking Sunday with Jesus' resurrection, Ignatius shows that Christology is the centre of his polemic. Jesus' figure constitutes the decisive and crucial issue in the separation between Judaism and Christianity. To celebrate Sunday means to recognize that salvation is possible only through Jesus' death and resurrection, whereas to keep the Sabbath means to be bound to the old covenant and not to understand the prophecies that announced Jesus' advent. The mention of the prophets immediately after the passage on the Sabbath and Sunday may be an implicit allusion to those prophets who did not keep the Sabbath: "Even the prophets who were his disciples in the spirit awaited him [Jesus] as their teacher" (*Magn.* 10:2). Ignatius was probably thinking of Isa. 1:13, a passage also quoted by Ps.-Barnabas in connection with the Sabbath (*Barn.* 15:8).

Ignatius' polemical target is twofold: he attacks on the one hand the Jewish-Christian community, from which he intends to separate himself, and on the other hand those Gentile-Christians who did not want to separate themselves from the Jewish-Christians. His letter is addressed to the Magnesians, but it reflects the situation in Antioch as well. As Zetterholm points out, we have to understand the conflict between the two streams within the Christian community in Antioch not only as a theological, but also as a social conflict. The Gentile-Christians, with Ignatius as their leader, want to react to the fact that they are being relegated to the status of mere God-fearers, deprived of the possibility of expressing their own religious identity, that is, of

¹⁶ Cf. S.J.D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness. Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*, Berkeley 1999, p. 187. Contra W. Schoedel, *A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, Philadelphia 1985, p. 123.

covenantal partners in all respects.¹⁷ While trying to separate his community from the Jewish-Christian community, Ignatius wants to preserve some common institutions (Sacred Scripture, the idea of covenant, the idea of Messiah, etc.), but to strip them of their original Jewish character. At the same time, he seems to oppose typically Christian institutions to the Jewish traditions, as in the case of Sunday. The conflict that originally began with a single question, i.e. the status of Gentiles in the Christian community, takes on new dimensions with Ignatius because of his tendency to stress the separation from Jewish-Christians. For him, the identity of the members of his community is essentially Christocentric. In this way, he develops an idea which was already present in Paul; but the negative portrait of Judaism is far more radical in Ignatius than in the Pauline pastoral letters and closer to Ps.-Barnabas' position.

c. *Epistle of Barnabas*

Like Ignatius, the author of the *Epistle of Barnabas* also tries to enhance the identity of his community by creating an opposition between "us" and "them": "Watch yourselves now and do not become like some people by piling up your sins, saying that the covenant is both theirs and ours. For it is ours. But they permanently lost it, in this way, when Moses had just received it" (4:6-7: προσέχειν νῦν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ μὴ ὁμοιοῦσθαί τισιν ἐπιωρεύοντας ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ὑμῶν λέγοντας ὅτι ἡ διαθήκη ἐκείνων καὶ ἡμῶν. Ἡμῶν μὲν· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι οὕτως εἰς τέλος ἀπώλεσαν αὐτὴν λαβόντος ἡδὴ τοῦ Μωϋσέως).¹⁸ Barnabas never said what he meant by "us" and "them." Many scholars think that the *Epistle of Barnabas*, like the letters of Ignatius, is the expression of a Gentile "us" as opposed to a Jewish "them." But this is not the more convincing interpretation. The Epistle rather reflects the position of a sectarian Jewish-Christianity: "us" here has to be identified with the Jewish Jesus-believers, whereas "them" are all the other Jews who did not accept the Gospel. Thus the "us" of Ps.-Barnabas are the new people prepared by Jesus according to the promise made to the Fathers (5:7), representing only

¹⁷ M. Zetterholm, *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch. A Social-Scientific Approach to the Separation between Judaism and Christianity*, London 2003, pp. 203-211.

¹⁸ Cf. also *Barn.* 13:1-3.

a small part of the Jewish people and reminding us of “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” who were destined to be the receivers of the Gospel (Matth. 10:6). Therefore, Ps.-Barnabas’ polemics are intra-Jewish, although his violent anti-Jewish tones might lead us to think the opposite.

In order to understand Ps.-Barnabas’ position on observances, it is necessary to take into account the typological and figurative character of his biblical exegesis.¹⁹ The scripture should not be literally interpreted, because its content has a symbolic meaning: the scapegoat as well as the red heifer (7:1-8:7), for instance, are prefigurations of Christ. Observances like sacrifices (2:1-5), fasting (3:1-5), circumcision (9:1-9), dietary laws (10:1-12) also have a symbolic meaning. The Sabbath commandment is interpreted in the same way: “Pay attention, children, to what it means that ‘he finished in six days.’ This means that in six thousand years the Lord will complete all things. For with him a day represents a thousand years ... ‘And he restored on the seventh day.’ This means that when his Son comes he will put an end to the age of the lawless one, judge the impious, and alter the sun, moon, and stars; then he will indeed rest on the seventh day” (15:4-5: Προσέχετε, τέκνα, τί λέγει τὸ “συνετέλεσεν ἐν ἑξ ἡμέραις.” Τοῦτο λέγει, ὅτι ἐν ἑξακισχίλοις ἔτεσιν συνετέλεσει κύριος τὰ σύμπαντα· ἡ γὰρ ἡμέρα παρ’ αὐτῷ σημαίνει χίλια ἔτη ... “Καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ.” Τοῦτο λέγει, ὅταν ἐλθὼν ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ καταργήσῃ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ ἀνόμου καὶ κρινεῖ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς καὶ ἀλλάξῃ τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας, τότε καλῶς καταπαύσεται ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ).

The fact that Barnabas’ community is no longer required to keep the Sabbath is justified not only by this symbolic interpretation but also by ethical arguments. To explain his vision, Ps.-Barnabas begins in 2:6 by quoting Isaiah’s injunction against sacrifices, offerings, the Temple, new moons and Sabbaths (Isa. 1:13), stating that God had “nullified these things, that the new law of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is without the yoke of compulsion, should provide an offering not made by humans.” Nevertheless, he is obliged to acknowledge that the Sabbath is part of the Decalogue. How could a commandment of the Lord be nullified? Ps.-Barnabas continues his exposition

¹⁹ P. Stefani, *L'antigiudaismo. Storia di un'idea*, Roma-Bari 2004, pp. 89-92.

by amplifying the biblical text of the Sabbath commandment: whereas the Torah merely says "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8) and "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee" (Deut. 5:12), Ps.-Barnabas adds two formulae drawn from Ps. 23:4: "Make the Sabbath of the Lord holy, with pure hands and pure heart" (15:1: Καὶ ἀγιάσατε τὸ σάββατον κυρίου χερσὶν καθαφαῖς καὶ καρδίᾳ καθαῇ). In doing so, the author of the Epistle considers the Sabbath from an ethical point of view, anticipating his eschatological interpretation. In fact, according to Ps.-Barnabas it is impossible for people living in his time to make the Sabbath holy and to keep it in a condition of purity, because the ethical perfection necessary to keep the Sabbath holy would only be realized after the *parousia* (15:6-7). He draws on a Jewish tradition also developed (although in a different way) in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the Fourth Gospel. A symbolic interpretation of the Sabbath had already been elaborated in Hellenistic Judaism, namely by Philo (*Decal.* 98; *Vita Mos.* II 215-216; *Spec. leg.* II 61-62). But there is a great difference between Philo and Ps.-Barnabas. The Alexandrian philosopher added a symbolic dimension to the observance of the Commandments, but he did not question the weekly celebration of the Sabbath; whereas Ps.-Barnabas denies altogether the need to observe the commandments. He puts the following words in the mouth of God: "It is not the Sabbaths of the present time that are acceptable to me, but the one I have made, in which I will give rest to all things and make a beginning of an eighth day, which is the beginning of another world" (15:8: Οὐ τὰ νῦν σάββατα ἐμοὶ δεκτά, ἀλλὰ ὃ πεποίηκα, ἐν ᾧ καταπαύσας τὰ πάντα ἀρχὴν ἡμέρας ὀγδόης ποιήσω, ὃ ἐστὶν ἄλλου κόσμου ἀρχὴν). This eschatological argument concerning the Sabbath allows Ps.-Barnabas to sketch subsequently a theology of Sunday: "Therefore we also celebrate the eighth day with gladness, for on it Jesus arose from the dead, and appeared, and ascended into heaven" (15:9: Διὸ καὶ ἄγομεν τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ὀγδόην εἰς εὐφροσύνην, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ φανερωθεὶς ἀνέβη εἰς οὐρανοῦς). The eighth day is not called κυριακή, as in the *Didache* and in Ignatius. However, all three authors have some things in common: like Ignatius, Ps.-Barnabas links the eighth day with Jesus' resurrection and, like the Didachist, he counts the day of the week following the Jewish system.

Conclusion

In the *Didache*, as well as in Matthew, there is no explicit trace of a competition between Sabbath and Sunday. The community of the Didachist and the community of Matthew apparently saw no conflict between these two liturgical moments and could have celebrated both, as the Jewish-Christian groups continued to do as long as they survived (cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* III 27.5 on the Ebionites). Ignatius' situation is very different. He uses the opposition between the Sabbath and Sunday as a polemical argument: it becomes the symbol of the incompatibility between "Christianity" and "Judaism," i.e. between the Jewish way and the Gentile way that alone leads to faith in Jesus. His polemic no longer concerns the different ways of observing the Sabbath (as in the Gospels), nor the observances which Gentile-Christians ought to respect (as in the *Didache*). Ignatius' purpose is to establish a sociological distinction between the Christians of pagan origin and the Christians of Jewish origin. Bauckham maintains that the Judaizers, whom Ignatius opposes, celebrated the Eucharist separately on the Sabbath and not on Sunday (cf. *Phil.* 4:1, cf. 3:3; *Magn.* 4:1; *Smyr.* 7:1; 8:2). One of the major concerns of the bishop of Antioch was the unity of his Church, realized through the liturgical relationship between the community and its leader. As a consequence, if some members of the community celebrated the Eucharist on Sabbath, while others celebrated it on Sunday, the liturgical communion that Ignatius strove for would be irremediably destroyed.²⁰ Ignatius justifies his refusal to keep the Sabbath by recurring to theological arguments, namely to his Christology: celebrating Sunday means recognizing Jesus' resurrection and his redemptive function. Ps.-Barnabas, who like Ignatius is hostile to the observances (although for completely different reasons), seems aware of the difficulty that the Sabbath belongs to the Decalogue, i.e. the foundation of both the ancient covenant of Moses and the new covenant of Jesus. Instead of calling for the abolition of the Sabbath, as he did for sacrifice (2:6) and circumcision (11:4), Barnabas suspends the Sabbath observance in his own time and postpones it

²⁰ M. Isacson, *To Each Their Own Letter. Structure, Themes, and Rhetorical Strategies in the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, Stockholm 2004, p. 92.

until the messianic age when the Sabbath can be fully kept. However, his eschatological interpretation of the Sabbath does not lead Ps.-Barnabas to formulate a logic of substitution, according to which Sunday is the new Christian Sabbath.

From the analysis of these three sources, it follows that theological questions and sociological conflicts both condition the position of their authors in relation to the Sabbath and, more generally, to the observances. According to the Didachist and Ignatius the main problem is the relationship between Jewish- and Gentile-Christians. The position of the Didachist reflects the position of the Jewish-Christians, who tried to impose a minimum of observances on the Gentiles wishing to join the community; they were not obliged to become Jews in order to become members of the Didachist's community, but they did have to respect the rules established by the so-called "Jerusalem decree," of which the *Didache* presents its own version.²¹ Nevertheless, the fulfillment of the entire Law is still the only way to attain perfection. Thus, the Didachist implicitly sanctions a distinction between Christians coming from paganism and those coming from Judaism, eventually resulting in a subordination of the Gentile-Christians to the Jewish-Christians. It is exactly this subordination that Ignatius opposes, giving voice to the demand of the Gentile-Christians who wanted to practice their belief in Jesus independently from "Judaism," i.e. Jewish-Christianity. While the Didachist argues for compatibility between some of the traditional Jewish observances and some new Christian observances, Ignatius pursues a strategy of separation. Ps.-Barnabas is also hostile to the observances, but, in contrast to Ignatius, his point of view is that of a messianic Jewish-Christian who believes that the precepts only have symbolic and spiritual meaning.

We know that Ignatius' line would eventually turn out to be the most successful in the history of the Church. He is the first to depreciate the Sabbath, and in doing so he anticipates a tendency that would become stronger in the second-century anti-Jewish writings. According to Dennis MacDonald, this devaluation of the Sabbath by Christians is the result of a new localization of holiness, no longer situated in a given time or geographical space, but within individuals.

²¹ Van de Sandt/Flusser, *The Didache*.

As a consequence of this spiritualization of holiness, which can be obtained by the purification of the body, Christians from the second century onwards began to lose interest in “calendrical sanctity,” as witnessed by a passage from the Gnostic *Gospel of Truth*.²² But this conclusion can be easily refuted if we think of the enormous concern shown by early Christians for the liturgical calendar. Christianity did not feel itself exempt from a sacral conception of time. On the contrary, it tried to preserve the sanctity of time. While at first the construction of time served to model Christian identity without the need to abolish the Sabbath and other liturgical moments of the Jewish tradition, later on the process of separation between Christianity and Judaism also involved the Sabbath.²³ In this article, by analyzing three texts from the first century and the early second century, I hope to have shed some light on the initial stages of this long process.

²² *Gospel of Truth* 32:18-33: “Even on Sabbath, he [Christ] labored for the sheep which he found fallen into the pit. He gave life to the sheep, having brought it up from the pit in order that you might know interiorly—you, the son of the interior knowledge—what is the Sabbath, on which it is not fitting for salvation to be idle, in order that you may speak from the day from above, which has no night, and from the light which does not sink because it is perfect. Say then from the heart that you are the perfect day.” Quoted by D. MacDonald, “A Response to R. Goldenberg and D.J. Harrington,” in: T. Eskenazi et al., *The Sabbath in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, New York 1991, p. 60.

²³ Cf. D. Stökl Ben Ezra, “Christians observing ‘Jewish’ Festivals of Autumn,” in: P.J. Tomson/D. Lambers-Petry (eds), *The Image of the Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature*, Tübingen 2003, pp. 53-73.

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PAUL AND THE PRACTICE OF PAIDEIA

Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte

ἔστι γὰρ φιλοσοφία ἐπιτήδευσις σοφίας, σοφία δ' ἐπιστήμη θείων
καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ τῶν τούτων αἰτίων

For philosophy is the practice or study of wisdom, and wisdom is the
knowledge of things divine and human and their causes

Philo, *De congressu quaerendae eruditionis gratia* 79¹

This contribution is intended as a token of gratitude for Henk Jan de Jonge's inspiring presence as a teacher and supervisor in its author's early years as a student of the New Testament, from the first course on Paul's use of the diatribe style onward. It attempts to understand Paul as a Hellenistic Jew who used the model of philosophical education (*paideia*) to shape and communicate his version of the gospel. Not only his means of communication, and the strategy Paul used in order to proclaim the gospel, but also the content of his gospel was influenced by Greek philosophical ideas. The concept of equality of all human beings in Christ, regardless of ethnic belonging, social status or gender, and Paul's stress on ethics and righteous behaviour should be seen in this light. In order to substantiate this view the present contribution falls apart in three sections. Section 1 searches for influences in Paul of the behaviour and ideas of popular philosophers. Section 2 asks for the way in which Jewish models of education have influenced Paul. And section 3 asks for the relevance of the concept of *traditio* in Paul's part of the Christ-movement.

1. Paul as a Hellenistic Philosopher

In Paul's days the education of upper-class children was taken care of by *ephebeia* or by private instructors.² These private instructors could

¹ Translation F.H. Colson/G.H. Whitaker in LCL.

² On the ideal and practice of *paideia* in the Hellenistic age, see H.-I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, Madison 1956, pp. 95-226. The model of *paideia* that Paul's ministry comes closest to is that of the philosophers; cf. Marrou, *History*, pp. 206-216, who correctly

be for example sophists, philosophers or rhetoricians.³ Sophists, philosophers, and rhetoricians were important figures in society of the early Empire. Given Paul's provenance from Tarsus—something only known from the Book of Acts, but hardly to be contested⁴—it is at least very likely that he became acquainted with Cynic and Stoic philosophers already at an early age.⁵ This acquaintance has helped shape Paul into the missionary he became. Philosophical *paideia* was a matter for the élite, but Paul must have known the examples of such philosophers out of his own experience.⁶ In fact, Paul describes himself in his letters as quite an élite figure.⁷ As it seems, Paul has been influenced by the ideals and practices of Hellenistic philosophers in a number of ways: Paul practised manual labour to earn his own living and combine this work with the preaching of his ideas and lived a life of abstinence. He wrote letters in order to communicate with his followers in his absence. He identifies his gospel as a “teaching” (διδασχῆ), the activity of bringing this gospel as διδάσκω, and speaks of the “learning” of his followers who accept the gospel (μανθάνω). In his teaching of the gospel Paul surrounded himself by a group of people whom he addressed as his “co-workers” and who can be seen as Paul's “school.” After Paul's death a number of people in this “school” continued his work by writing pseudepigraphic letters to keep Paul's name and thoughts alive. And last but not least: the central theological notion of the unity of all human beings in Christ is highly comparable with the Stoic notion of the equality of all humans over against the natural law. All these points connect Paul with

remarks that “Philosophy was a minority culture for an intellectual élite prepared to make the necessary effort” (p. 206).

³ See especially B.W. Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists. Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 2002, who on pp. 59-89 points out that Philo's “sophists” were distinguished from “philosophers, dialecticians, grammarians, musicians, geometricians and any other specialised group” who were involved with *paideia* (p. 78).

⁴ Acts 22:3; cf. also 9:30; 11:25.

⁵ See W.W. Gasque, “Tarsus,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6, pp. 333-334; also H. Böhlig, *Die Geisteskultur von Tarsus im augusteischen Zeitalter mit Berücksichtigung der paulinischen Schriften*, Göttingen 1913.

⁶ The scene in Acts 17:16-34 is probably a literary invention by the author of Acts, but the sheer fact that this author presents Paul as debating philosophers indicates that for this first-century author a certain parallelism was evident.

⁷ See Gal. 1:14; Phil. 3:5-6.

Hellenistic philosophers of his day, and the abundance of evidence justifies a brief description of the most important points.

With regard to his manual labour, it appears that Paul worked with a specific strategy when trying to raise a new congregation. Thus, he had himself supported by a congregation or congregations he had previously founded so that he would not become dependent of the group he was bringing together in the city where he had newly arrived (see e.g. 2 Cor. 11:7-11; Phil. 4:15-16).⁸ Another means to support his own livelihood was his manual labour as a tent-maker or leather-worker. Indications for the fact that Paul worked with his hands are found in a number of passages in the letters.⁹ The nature of this work is not revealed in the letters, but there is no reason to distrust the report in Acts 18:3 where Paul is mentioned as a σκηνοποιός. As I have argued elsewhere, the fact that Paul performed manual labour in order to enable himself to proclaim the gospel is to be seen as evidence of his being influenced by the practice of, mostly Cynic, philosophers whom he must have known from his social context.¹⁰ The practice of manual labour and the support from outsiders enabled Paul to be free from obligations and therefore to act as a true and independent envoy of God. This ideal, of the free and independent philosopher as an envoy of God, is described by Epictetus in his *Diss.* III 22.45-49:¹¹

καὶ πῶς ἐνδέχεται μὴδὲν ἔχοντα, γυμνόν, ἄοικον, ἀνέστιον, αὐχμῶντα, ἄδουλον, ἄπολιν διεξάγειν εὐρώως; ἰδοὺ ἀπέσταλκεν ὑμῖν ὁ θεὸς τὸν δείξοντα ἔργῳ, ὅτι ἐνδέχεται. ἴδετέ με, ἄοικος εἰμι, ἄπολις, ἀκτῆμων, ἄδουλος, χαμαὶ κοιμῶμαι· οὐ γυνή, οὐ παιδία, οὐ πραιτωρίδιον, ἀλλὰ γῆ μόνον καὶ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἐν τριβωνάριον. καὶ τί μοι λείπει; οὐκ εἰμι ἄλυπος, οὐκ εἰμι ἄφοβος, οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; πότε ὑμῶν εἰδέν μέ τις ἐν ὁρέξει ἀποτυγχάνοντα, πότ' ἐν ἐκκλίσει περπίπτοντα; (...) τίς με ἰδὼν οὐχὶ τὸν βασιλέα τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ὁρᾶν οἶται καὶ δεσπότην;

And how is it possible for a man who has nothing, who is naked, without home or hearth, in squalor, without a slave, without a city, to live serenely? Behold, God has sent you the man who will show in practice that it is possible. "Look at me," he says, "I am without a home, without a city, without property, without a slave; I sleep on the ground;

⁸ L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, Leuven 2003, pp. 221-222.

⁹ 1 Cor. 4:11-12; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27; Phil. 4:12.

¹⁰ Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, pp. 221-228.

¹¹ Translation W.A. Oldfather in LCL.

I have neither wife nor children, no miserable governor's mansion, but only earth, and sky, and one rough cloak. Yet what do I lack? Am I not free from pain and fear, am I not free? When has anyone among you seen me failing to get what I desire, or falling into what I would avoid? (...) Who, when he lays eyes upon me, does not feel that he is seeing his king and his master?"

It is the same combination of this ideal of freedom (αὐταρκεία) and the idea of being sent as an envoy, an apostle, that Paul defends in 1 Cor. 9:1-12. There, the focus of Paul's argument is on his abstinence from financial support by the Corinthian congregation. Paul considers himself entitled to that support, but refrains from claiming it, because he does not want it to form an "obstacle" to the gospel (ἐγκοπὴ 9:12). Combined with his apparent sexual and marital abstinence (1 Cor. 7:7), Paul's attitude appears to reflect the philosophical ideals of αὐταρκεία and ἐγκρατεία.¹²

Not only did Paul model his ministry to a certain extent after the example he must have known from Hellenistic philosophers, he also preached his gospel in a way that parallels their teachings. Philosophers did not regard their teaching as strictly intellectual—philosophy was considered a way of life.¹³ Especially with the Stoics the emphasis of philosophy was on leading a virtuous life. Musonius Rufus, e.g., considered "living in a sinless and good way" the highest aim of philosophy.¹⁴ Philosophy was deemed important for it taught people to aim for this way of life. Philosophers educated their pupils by training them by their instruction. Paul appears to use the same approach in the way he deals with the early Christ groups. His ideal is a "holy" life,¹⁵ which he defines in more or less the same terms as

¹² For αὐταρκεία, see e.g. Epicurus, *Epistula ad Idomeneum* (= Stobaeus, *Florilegium* XVII 14); *Epistula ad Menoecium* (= Diogenes Laertius X 130-131). Among the Stoics: Diogenes Laertius VII 127; Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* V 79. A Cynic view on this is found in Dio Chrysostomus, *Orationes* 6, 8, 9, and 10. For ἐγκρατεία see Plutarch, *De stoicorum repugnantiis* VII 1034d; Galen, *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* 467.3-468.5. See also Philo, *De congressu quaerendae eruditionis gratia* 79-80.

¹³ This point is emphatically made by P. Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life. Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford/Cambridge MA 1995). According to Hadot Christianity positioned itself from the patristic period on as the 'true philosophy'.

¹⁴ Musonius Rufus II 6.5-12: ζῆν ἀναμαρτήτως καὶ καλῶς.

¹⁵ Paul frequently uses the adjective ἅγιος and forms of the verb ἁγιάζω in his description of the followers of Christ: Paul uses ἅγιος fifty times; for the believers as "holy ones," see Rom. 1:7; 8:27; 12:1; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:1, 2; 16:1, 15; 2 Cor. 1:1; 8:4; 9:1, 12;

Musonius does. This ideal is taught through an "instruction", a διδασχῇ. In 1 Cor. 14:6 Paul labels the various genres of his communication in the Christ group of Corinth as "revelations", "knowledge", "prophecy" and "instruction".¹⁶ And in Rom. 6:17; 16:17 Paul refers to the instruction that the Christ group in Rome had received with the same word. In an off-hand remark made in 1 Cor. 4:17 Paul labels his activity "in every group" (ἐκκλησία) as "teaching" (διδάσκω). This teaching leads to a "way" (ὁδός) that Paul has taught the Corinthians, and it is Timothy's task to remind (ἀναμνήσει) the Christ group of that teaching. The Christ followers to whom Paul writes his letters have "learned" (μανθάνω) this "instruction": Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 4:6; 14:35; Phil. 4:9.¹⁷ Both in his view of the ideal life of the followers of Christ and in his manner of communicating this view, Paul was apparently influenced by the model of Greek philosophy, the model of *paideia*.

For his instruction of the Christ groups he founded Paul made use of a team of "co-workers" (συνεργοί).¹⁸ This group was probably not clearly defined, and the designation "co-worker" was probably not really a title but rather a loose term Paul used for a number of people who assisted him in his task. Paul's mission was clearly not a lonely, individual enterprise. The number of people involved in this mission cannot be reconstructed with any degree of certainty, but this much is clear that Paul mentions more than fifty people in his letters.¹⁹ Since Paul clearly instructed these people and had them, in turn, instruct others, it is indeed justified to speak of a beginning Pauline school. For now it is enough to note the similarity with philosophic schools. The most important co-workers in Paul's school will be dealt with in section 3 below.

13:12; Phil. 1:1; 4:21, 22; 1 Thess. 3:13; Phlm. 5. The verb ἀγιάζω is used in Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 7:14; 1 Thess. 5:23.

¹⁶ See also 14:26 where Paul points out that these various genres were in common use in the Christ group of Corinth.

¹⁷ In 1 Cor. 14:31 Paul uses the same verb for the interpretation of prophecy.

¹⁸ Paul uses the term in Rom. 16:3 (Prisca and Aquila), 16:21 (Timothy), 1 Cor. 3:9 (of himself and, probably, Sosthenes), 2 Cor. 1:24 (again of himself and this time, probably, Timothy), 8:23 (of himself), 1 Thess. 3:2 (Timothy), Phil. 2:25 (Epaphroditus), and 4:3 (of Clement and "the others"). Paul also mentions Epaphroditus in Phil. 2:25, this time as an "envoy" of the congregation (ὁμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον; this term suggests that Epaphroditus is seen here as an ἀπόστολος ἐκκλησίας). On Paul's fellow-workers, see Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, pp. 228-233. On Clement neither Paul nor Acts gives any further information.

¹⁹ For a list, see Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, pp. 228-230.

Another point in which Paul's ministry resembles the example of Greek philosophers is the fact that he communicated with his followers by means of letters. Famous philosophers such as Cicero and Seneca used the same instrument and the phenomenological parallel goes even further than that: after Paul's death his followers continued to write letters that they pseudepigraphically attributed to Paul. This practice is reminiscent of e.g. the Cynic epistles as collected and translated by Abraham Malherbe.²⁰

Hellenistic philosophers not only helped to shape the form of Paul's ministry, they also influenced him with regard to his views. The use by Paul of the diatribe style has been noticed as proof of his being influenced by the philosophers of his day.²¹ But this is not the only point. The core idea that formed the backbone to Paul's understanding of the gospel, the egalitarian conception of the unity of the believers in Christ, should be understood as originating in a philosophical concept: the Stoic idea of the equality of all human beings over against the law of nature. A number of contemporary philosophers have come to regard Paul as the founder of universalism, the one who invented the idea of a universal truth.²² Whether this interpretation is correct or not, it is indeed important to notice how strongly Paul apparently felt about the unity of Jew and Greek in Christ. It is a conflict concerning this point that apparently made him break up with Barnabas in Antioch, and after this incident Paul proclaims a law-free gospel for pagan followers of Christ.²³ Elsewhere I have argued that this incident shaped Paul's identity and his gospel to

²⁰ A.J. Malherbe, *The Cynic Epistles. A Study Edition*, Atlanta 1977.

²¹ See esp. R. Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe*, Göttingen 1910, and S.K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 1981. Stowers restated Bultmann's conclusion and argued that Paul was dependent on the diatribe style, but had also made this style his own (cf. esp. p. 178).

²² See e.g. A. Badiou, *St. Paul. The Foundation of Universalism*, Stanford 2003 (orig.: *Saint Paul. La fondation de l'universalisme* 1997)); and J. Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*, Stanford 2004.

²³ For a discussion of the Antioch incident, see esp. M. Zetterholm, *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch. A Social-Scientific Approach to the Separation Between Judaism and Christianity*, London/New York 2003, pp. 129-164. Unfortunately, Zetterholm's solution, viz that "the social distinction between Jew and Gentile is maintained" (p. 164) does not seem to correspond with Paul's treatment of the Law as one of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in Gal. 4:1-11. Paul's argument here can hardly be understood as an attempt to uphold the social distinction between Jew and Greek.

a high extent.²⁴ Paul expresses this idea of the unity of all believers in what is often considered a baptismal formula, quoted with the deepest consent in Gal. 3:28.²⁵

In his *Paul and the Stoics* Troels Engberg-Pedersen has argued that the structure of Paul's ethical thought basically coincides with the structure of the Stoic philosophical system.²⁶ It would seem that Paul's anthropology was indeed highly influenced by Stoic thoughts, and that this is also the case with regard to Paul's stance on the equality of believers in Christ. At many points in his letters Paul gives a theological legitimisation of the anthropological view that must have originated in his own experience: that God makes no distinction between Jew or Greek, male and female, free man or slave. According to Paul this is the case because in God there is no *προσωποληψία* (Rom. 2:11; cf. also Col. 3:25). It seems as though much of the content of Paul's letter to the Romans was intended to substantiate exactly this point. According to Paul, this basic unity of all humans over against God originates in the concept of the "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15), which he considered as having begun in the advent of Christ. Thus, the theological legitimisation of the unity of the believers in Christ is given in the fact that Christ constitutes the newness of life, a beginning of the new era that Paul thought was dawning. But this theological thought must have originated in Paul's experience of the sociological unity of believers in Antioch, Jews and Greeks alike, and his vehement defence of that unity when he considered it at stake in his discussion with Peter (and Barnabas) shows that for Paul this was not just an idea. For him, it was the prime consequence of the death, resurrection, and heavenly reign of Christ. This interpretation shows great resemblance to the Stoic view of the unity of humans over against the law of nature.

Numerous philosophers defend the idea that the law of nature is the basis of ethics and of ethnic laws.²⁷ The thought that the law of

²⁴ Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, pp. 177-201.

²⁵ See also Rom. 10:12; 1 Cor. 12:13. A later version of the formula of Gal. 3:28 is found in Col. 3:11.

²⁶ T. Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics*, Louisville 2000. Cf. especially the first, historical, thesis in the conclusion to the book: "(...) I have attempted to show that there is a single, basic thought structure that is formulated in both Stoic ethics and in Paul" (p. 301).

²⁷ In her summary of Greek philosophy De Vogel mentions Diogenes Laertius VII 128; Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* III 21.71, *De legibus* I 16.44. See C.J. de Vogel, *Greek Philosophy 3: The Hellenistic-Roman Period*, Leiden 1973, pp. 176-177.

nature is the root of morality led to the idea of equality of all men as held by Cynics and Stoics. Cicero defends it in *De legibus* I 10.28-30. It results e.g. in the idea that social distinctions such as slavery are not founded in nature and therefore deny the basic unity of mankind.²⁸ The Cynic way of life, stressing the Cynic's freedom from human conventions by trying to live according to the law of nature, was an attempt to live out the principle of human equality. In this view it is the practice of virtue, understood as life in accordance with the law of nature, that makes people equal. The ideal is succinctly expressed in the pseudigraphical letter of Heraclitus to Hermodorus:

... οὐ γὰρ τύχη τὸ ἰσοϋμένου, ἀλλ' ἀρετή. (...) μὴν πονηρία δουλαγωγεῖ, μὴν ἐλευθεροῖ ἀρετή, ἀνθρώπων δὲ οὐδεὶς, κἂν ἐπιτάττῃτε ἄλλοις διὰ τύχην ἀγαθοῖς οὔσιν, αὐτοὶ δοῦλοί ἐστε δι' ἐπιθυμίαν, κελεύόμενοι ὑπὸ τῶν ἑαυτῶν δεσποτῶν.

... for it is not fortune that makes men equal, but virtue. (...) Evil alone makes one a slave; virtue alone frees, but no man can do either. Even if you happen to command others who are virtuous, you yourselves are slaves on account of your desire, and you are ordered around by your own masters.²⁹

This idea of human beings being equal over against virtue and the law of nature should be seen as antecedent to Paul's view of the equality of all believers in Christ. What Paul apparently realised in his missionary endeavour is that for him the equality of men was not a matter of principle or virtue, but of faith. It was practised by the believers through their act of entering into the new creation.

If the above reconstruction is correct, it seems that the Jewish apocalypticist Paul was thoroughly influenced by the practices and thoughts of Cynic-Stoic philosophers.³⁰ Paul even took up the role of instructor, and acted as a teacher who raised his followers to proclaim his views yet again to others.³¹ Formally there is an important

²⁸ Seneca, *De beneficiis* III 22 and 28.

²⁹ Heraclitus 9:5 in Malherbe, *The Cynic Epistles*.

³⁰ Much has been written on Paul as an apocalypticist. Among many other studies, see esp. M.C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death. Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5*, Sheffield 1988, pp. 21-37, and his "Paul and Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology," in: J. Marcus/M.L. Soards (eds), *Apocalyptic and the New Testament. Essays in Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, Sheffield 1989, pp. 169-190.

³¹ See e.g. the way in which Paul speaks of Timothy in 1 Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:19, 25, 28; 1 Thess. 3:2; cf. 2 Cor. 9:3. That this practice of Paul's sending of an envoy who was supposed to

difference with the concept of *paideia*: the instruction of the gospel did not aim at gaining societal status, and as instructor, Paul was not hired. Nevertheless, Paul's use of the tools of *paideia* does justify this usage of the term. Paul's *paideia* strategy appears to have been crucial to the whole missionary enterprise he started.³² This comparison therefore leads to a new question: how does Paul relate to the common pattern of instruction among first century Jews? It is this question that the next section is concerned with.

2. Jewish *paideia* in the First Century

Much is uncertain about the practice of *paideia* in first century Judaism. What is clear, however, is that as in pagan circles schools were a private matter.³³ The information we have is scanty and fragmentary, but especially Josephus does give us some insight into the way in which education was practised in this period.

In sections 8-12 of his *Life* Josephus describes his own education and indicates from the outset that this trajectory was a private one. He refers to the initial years of his childhood as "having been raised together with my brother Matthias" (συνπαιδευόμενος ἀδελφῷ Ματθία τοῦ νομα, 8). Josephus explicitly states that he "forged ahead into a vast wealth of education (παιδεία)."³⁴ After stating that he had become a source of knowledge for the chief priests and the most important men in Jerusalem at age fourteen (9) Josephus continues with a description of the years that Greek youngsters would have spent in an *ephebeion*. At age sixteen Josephus decided to take a closer look at the three groups he presents as the most important varieties of

proclaim his views on his behalf also influenced the deutero-Pauline epistles is clear from Col. 1:7.

³² According to Steve Mason, παιδεία "was a highly evocative term signifying both the totality of Greek culture and the indispensable avenue into it, namely: the education of the young"; cf. S. Mason, *Flavius Josephus. Translation and Commentary 9: Life of Josephus*, Leiden 2001, p. 12. Though there is obviously a formal difference between the cultural phenomenon of παιδεία in Greco-Roman antiquity and what Paul did, the use of this term in the study of Paul is justified, since he aimed at "educating" people in order to convert them (cf. 1 Cor. 4:17).

³³ See S.J.D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, Louisville/London 2006, pp. 114-117. Cohen rightly remarks: "Disciple circles were the normal pattern for higher education in both Jewish and Greco-Roman antiquity" (p. 115).

³⁴ Mason, *Life of Josephus*, p. 12.

Judaism of his day: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Josephus mentions these groups as οἱ παρ' ἡμῖν αἵρέσεις. His use of the specific word αἵρεσις here is paralleled by the author of Acts in his presentation of the Sadducees (5:17), the Pharisees (15:5; 26:5), and the Nazoreans (24:5, 14; 28:22). This specific usage indicates that the term was in common use, and that the various factions in Judaism were signified in terms used for philosophical groups in Greco-Roman antiquity.

Josephus is brief on what he did among these three groups, but the remark he makes is of crucial interest: "So I submitted myself to hard training and laborious exercises and passed through the three courses."³⁵ Thackeray's translation here suggests a certain training programme of each of the three factions. This is indeed implied by the Greek: σκληραγωγῆσας οὖν ἑμαυτὸν καὶ πολλὰ πονηθεὶς τὰς τρεῖς διηλθον. Can this remark indeed be taken as evidence that the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes had certain training programmes? The evidence Josephus presents us with elsewhere on the Essenes does seem to sustain this suspicion.

In his *Jewish War* II 119-161 Josephus offers an extensive description of the Essenes, and part of this description is his reference to their initiation programme (137-138). Apparently, those who wished to become member of the Essenes were left on their own for a period of a year, in which they had to prove themselves worthy of entry into the community. Next, a period of two years followed in which the candidate was supposed to live according to the rules of the Essenes, though without taking part in the communal meetings (138). Although Josephus does not mention anything about instruction of the candidates, there is evidence that the initiation period contained an element of instruction. In 139-142 Josephus describes a number of oaths the initiates had to swear. Among those is an oath not to alter the ideas that the initiate has been taught when passing them on to others: πρὸς τούτους ὁμνῶσιν μηδενὶ μὲν μεταδοῦναι τῶν δογμάτων ἑτέρως ἢ ὡς αὐτὸς μετέλαβεν (142). The verb μεταλαμβάνω is a technical term for the receiving of instructions in the process of learning, and its usage by Josephus here in this passage indicates that the process of instruction among the Essenes did involve an element of learning.

³⁵ Translation H.St.-J. Thackeray in LCL.

Since Josephus' description of the Pharisees and the Sadducees puts these groups on the same level as the Essenes, it lies at hand to suppose that they, too, must have had a period of instruction for would-be members.

The description in Josephus' *Life* continues with his reference to a certain Bannus. This ascetic character apparently lived in the desert with his pupils. Josephus characterises himself as a ζηλωτής ("devoted disciple"; Thackeray) of Bannus. The description in the *Life* ends with Josephus' statement that after three years, aged nineteen, he started life as a Pharisee and returned to the city.

Tessa Rajak points out that Josephus actually describes that, at age sixteen, he went over to the Greek system of education.³⁶ Based on what she finds in Galen, Justin Martyr, Lucian of Samosata, and Tacitus, Rajak concludes that the scheme given by Josephus of visiting the various schools was a literary *topos*. However, she hastens to add, this *topos* was actually practised, and there is no reason to consider Josephus' description as unreliable. The evidence Rajak mentions is enough to substantiate her view. It is very likely that Josephus indeed visited the three groups he mentions. In combination with the description of the initiation period for becoming member of the Essenes, Josephus' description of his own education gives credence to the supposition that these groups actually practised training periods for new members.

In his discussion of Josephus' view of *paideia* Steve Mason summarises the most important themes. According to Mason the ideals of Judean education corresponded to a high degree with "those of the conservative Roman ideal": "In both worlds education is: a paternal responsibility; grounded in ancient laws and customs (*Apion* II 173-174); eminently practical (*Apion* II 171-173); suffused with the bucolic virtues of simplicity, frugality, and honor (*Apion* II 284; 294); and calculated to produce an effective public figure (*Life* 12-13). Above all, both Roman and Judean traditionalists define themselves to a large extent *over against the Greeks*."³⁷ Thus, the ideal of *paideia* was practised in order to educate the young and shape them into being virtuous persons who would live according to the ways of the fathers. This type of education must have been practised by the

³⁶ T. Rajak, *Josephus. The Historian and His Society*, London 1983, pp. 27-39.

³⁷ Mason, *Life of Josephus*, p. 12.

Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Josephus' period with Bannus indicates that personal instruction was a crucial element in this type of education, and this coincides with what we find in the evidence on Paul.

In the account of Acts Paul is pictured as having been educated by Gamaliel. In Acts 22:3 Paul says of himself: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today (παρὰ πόδας Γαμαλιὴλ πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ ἀκριβειαν τοῦ πατρῷου νόμου)." Whether the report on Paul's education by Gamaliel is trustworthy or not cannot be established. Several scholars have raised a number of arguments against the reliability of this report,³⁸ but the point cannot be disproved. The way in which the author of Acts describes Paul's provenance and education is put in the form of a literary *topos*.³⁹ The mention of Gamaliel may have been evoked by the fact that this leading Pharisee was apparently so influential that he could urge the Sanhedrin to release the apostles (cf. Acts 5:33-40). The combination of Gamaliel's literary role in Acts and the strange phenomenon that Paul does not mention him at all makes it likely that Paul's education in Jerusalem is a literary invention by the author of Acts.

Notwithstanding the above scepticism on Paul's education in Jerusalem, it is clear that Paul has been "educated" as a Pharisee. He mentions his pharisaic background explicitly in Phil. 3:5,⁴⁰ and his reasoning with regard to the Law proves that Paul was trained and skilled in this respect. So much is clear, that in the period in which he was instructed—wherever that may have been—Paul must have been taught to read, interpret, and explain the Mosaic Law. The instruction Paul received must have been given to him in a school-like setting. In this setting Paul was trained to read, memorize, and explain the Law. The fact that the oral tradition on the explanation of the Law was so crucial to the Pharisees indicates that their manner of instruction must have been comparable to what happened in Greek philosophy.

In his reconstruction of ancient philosophy Pierre Hadot points out that in the early imperial period philosophy was taught by comment-

³⁸ Most notably W.C. van Unnik, "Tarsus or Jerusalem. The City of Paul's Youth," in: *id.*, *Sparsa Collecta. The Collected Essays of W.C. van Unnik* 1, Leiden 1973, pp. 259-320.

³⁹ Thus Van Unnik, "Tarsus or Jerusalem."

⁴⁰ Here, the emphasis is on his view of the Law: κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος.

ing upon texts of great philosophers.⁴¹ In his words: "The radical change that took place around the first century BCE consisted in the fact that from this point on, philosophical teaching itself essentially took on the form of textual commentary."⁴² According to Hadot, "philosophy classes were henceforth devoted primarily to the reading and exegesis of texts."⁴³ The change that Hadot describes resulted in a practice of *reading* philosophy rather than orally teaching it. Hadot connects this development to the increasing popularity among philosophers of the thought that truth is revealed in writings.⁴⁴ For this reason, the search for truth consisted mainly of reading and interpreting texts that were thought to contain a certain revelation.

The parallel of the development in ancient philosophy depicted by Hadot and the practice of reading and interpreting the Law that was practised in Pharisaic circles is evident. Also the reading of holy texts by the Essenes, and—no doubt—the Sadducees, can be seen in similar fashion. Josephus' designation of the three major groups in Judaism as philosophical schools may have been less a matter of rhetoric than is often thought. Pagan readers must have conceived these groups in exactly those terms, and it is far from unlikely that Greek speaking Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes looked at themselves in the same terms.

The analysis given in the above helps to position not just Paul's own education, but also his practice in later life. As his letters show, the reading and interpretation of the Jewish Bible remained of prime importance to Paul.⁴⁵ After the great transformation in his life Paul became convinced that Christ was the core message of the Jewish Bible, and many of the arguments in his letters indicate that he read

⁴¹ P. Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, Cambridge MA/London 2002 (orig.: *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie antique?* [1995]), pp. 149-153.

⁴² Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, p. 150.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, p. 152: "In a sense, we can say that in this period, philosophical discourse, especially in the form it adopted in Neoplatonism, considered truth to be revealed."

⁴⁵ See e.g. the discussion by A.F. Segal, "Paul's Jewish Presuppositions," in: J.D.G. Dunn (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*, Cambridge 2003, pp. 159-172. According to Segal, Paul "seems to have a good deal of familiarity with Greek philosophy," and "uses scripture to understand the promises of God and to confirm that his arguments about the significance of the crucified Messiah are correct" (pp. 164-165).

his bible from a Christ-centred hermeneutic.⁴⁶ The explanation of the Jewish Bible in this fashion was an important part of Paul's work, and it is a major element in his theological legacy. The fact that Paul, in his preaching of the gospel, referred to ancient scriptures containing a revealed truth the nature of which had only become clear through Christ (in Paul's view), brings him even closer to ancient philosophers. Seen from this perspective, what Paul did must have been conceived by Greeks as the teaching of a philosopher.

Positioning Paul as a philosopher is less strange than may seem at first sight. Second century Christian authors consciously adopt the strategy of presenting their views as a "philosophy." Justin Martyr, for example, and other apologists "used the notion of the *Logos* to define Christianity as *the* philosophy."⁴⁷ A number of authors from the patristic period speak of Christianity as a "revealed philosophy," among them most notably Clement of Alexandria.⁴⁸ This need not be a later re-interpretation of the Christian gospel. Given the analogies between Paul and philosophers of his day, the conclusion is justified that Christ-movement understood itself in terms of Hellenistic philosophy already during the first century CE. To substantiate this point, a further look at Paul's position within the Christ-movement of his day is needed.

3. *Paideia and the Chain of Tradition*

It is evident that Paul received and gave instructions with regard to the gospel. Due to the character of his letters as occasional writings in which he often has to defend his apostolic status, Paul is usually not very explicit on the instructions he himself had received. In Galatians, e.g., he vehemently stresses his direct divine call and downplays the human chain of tradition in which he stood.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Paul must have been instructed with regard to the gospel in, at least, Damascus and Antioch.⁵⁰ He refers to such instruction im-

⁴⁶ See among many examples the way in which Paul relates the Exodus narrative to Christ in 1 Cor. 10:1-13.

⁴⁷ Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, p. 239.

⁴⁸ For a survey, see Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?*, pp. 237-252.

⁴⁹ See 1:1 οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου κτλ.; cf. 1:10, 12(1).

⁵⁰ Paul himself mentions the two cities in a relatively off-hand manner in Gal. 1:17 (Damascus), and 2:11-14 (Antioch). The report in Acts is more detailed, but not necessarily

plicitly when he underscores the fact that he himself had “received” the gospel. The description of Paul’s visit to Jerusalem in Gal. 1:18 is utterly brief and vague, but here the verb ἱστορέω may point to an instruction given to Paul by Peter.⁵¹ The matter is clearer in 1 Corinthians. In 1 Cor. 11:23 Paul uses the terminology of παραλαμβάνω and παραδίδωμι in his description of the Lord’s Supper. The celebration of that ritual had obviously already developed into a normative tradition that was considered important enough to pass on.⁵² In 1 Cor. 15:3 Paul’s use of the same traditional terminology points out that the gospel could be summarised in a brief form and that this gospel was viewed in similar fashion as the instruction for the Lord’s Supper: “For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received (παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον κτλ.).” For Paul, the gospel was an instruction that was to be “received” (1 Cor. 15:1; Gal. 1:9; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 2:13; 4:1). The deutero-Pauline epistles show that Paul’s school developed Christ-centred thoughts on at least eschatology, anthropology, cosmology, and soteriology. The ideas that were current in this school did not take the shape of a coherent theological system, but of practical reasoning on issues that the members of this school encountered in everyday life. As such, the similarity with the practical reasoning and the instruction and passing on of knowledge by especially Cynic-Stoic philosophers is noteworthy.

historically correct: Acts 9:10 links Paul with Ananias in Damascus, 9:19 places him among the disciples in Damascus, and 9:22 describes how Paul started his proclamation of the gospel there. In Acts 11:26 Paul is mentioned as preaching together with Barnabas in Antioch for the duration of a year. On these two cities and their importance for Paul, see esp. M. Hengel/A. M. Schwemer, *Paul between Damascus and Antioch. The Unknown Years*, London 1997, pp. 24-90 (Damascus), and pp. 178-310 (Antioch).

⁵¹ Longenecker rightly warns against overinterpreting ἱστορήσαι as διδασκῆναι, but adds that “it is not beyond the range of reasonable probability to believe that such discussions included Peter’s accounts of Jesus’ ministry, and that from such accounts Paul learned much.” See R.N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Dallas 1990, pp. 37-38.

⁵² Henk Jan de Jonge has reconstructed the formation of the ritual of the eucharist in his valedictory lecture. Here, he takes up Matthias Klinghardt’s theory on the Hellenistic symposium as basis of the Christian tradition on the Last Supper, and reconstructs the tradition in which bread and wine are equated with the body and blood of Christ as secondary to the initial symposium practice. See H.J. de Jonge, *Avondmaal en symposium. Oorsprong en eerste ontwikkeling van de vroegchristelijke samenkomst*, Leiden 2007; and M. Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl und Mahlgemeinschaft. Soziologie und Liturgie frühchristlicher Mahlfeiern*, Tübingen/Basel 1996.

Paul obviously not only stood on the receiving end of tradition, he actually organised the next chain of this tradition himself. The development of a Pauline school no doubt started with the organisation of Paul's missionary enterprise. As was mentioned in section 1, Paul organised a group of "co-workers" to help him in his ministry of instruction. A number of persons in this group worked closely together with Paul. The evidence Paul gives on these people points first and foremost at Barnabas, Silvanus, Timothy, Sosthenes, Aquila and Prisca, and Titus. Let us take a brief look at these colleagues of Paul.

Paul mentions Barnabas only in 1 Cor. 9:6 and Gal. 2:1, 9. The reference in 1 Cor. 9:6 indicates that Paul worked together with Barnabas, and Gal. 2:1, 9 describe the parting of their ways. Apparently, Paul initially sided with Barnabas, but broke up with him on the crucial matter of the unity of Jewish and pagan followers of Christ. The Book of Acts describes Barnabas as the initiator of the contact, and pictures Paul as initially fulfilling the role of Barnabas' aide.⁵³ There is no indication that this reconstruction is incorrect, and therefore we may safely conclude that Paul's own mission started after he broke up with Barnabas.⁵⁴ The co-workers who can be regarded as followers of Paul therefore date to the period after the incident at Antioch.

The first letter of Paul to have been preserved, 1 Thessalonians, was written not just by Paul, but by Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy (1 Thess. 1:1). It is not by accident that the letter is written in the first person plural: this is not a personal letter by Paul, nor is it an apostolic letter sent under the authority of one apostle. It is a letter written by the group of missionaries that had apparently brought the gospel to Thessalonica. It is clear though that Paul was the leading figure of this group (cf. 1 Thess. 2:18).

The two co-workers mentioned in 1 Thess. 1:1 also figure elsewhere in Paul's letters. Paul mentions Silvanus and Timothy in 2 Cor. 1:19 as well, and explicitly states that the three of them together had preached Christ among the Corinthians. For the rest, Paul is silent about Silvanus, but he is mentioned by other authors in 2

⁵³ In Acts 9:27 Barnabas introduces Paul to "the apostles," and in 11:25 it is again Barnabas who "went to Tarsus to look for Saul" (NRSV). The order in which their names are mentioned in 11:30; 12:25; 13:2, 7 indicates that in this period Barnabas was the *primus* of the two. This suddenly changes in 13:42.

⁵⁴ The same conclusion is drawn by M. Öhler, *Barnabas*, Tübingen 2003, pp. 478-486.

Thess. 1:1 and 1 Pet. 5:12. The former of these passages is no doubt copied after the example of 1 Thess. 1:1.⁵⁵ The latter, however, mentions a certain "Silvanus" as "our faithful brother". Since the literary character of "Peter" as author of 1 Peter is surrounded by many questions, the link of this Silvanus to Paul's is far from clear. The Book of Acts mentions what is probably the same person under the name of "Silas".⁵⁶ Here, Silas is depicted as a Jewish follower of Christ who initially preached the gospel together with Judas Barsabbas, and the two of them are said to be "leaders among the brothers" (15:22; NRSV). The two of them convey the apostolic decree to the church of Antioch. In 15:32 they are said to be "prophets" (καὶ αὐτοὶ προφηταὶ ὄντες). According to Acts 15:40 Silas/Silvanus was chosen by Paul as his new missionary partner after he had broken up with Barnabas. In 17:14-15 Timothy joins the two of them. This Timothy was introduced into the narrative of Acts in 16:1-3 in the curious report of Paul circumcising Timothy because his mother was Jewish, while his father was Greek.⁵⁷ Silas and Timothy are left by Paul in Berea (17:15) to join him again in Corinth (18:5). Strangely enough Acts' report on these two aides stops here. In 19:22 Timothy sides no longer with Silas, but with Erastes. In 20:4, where Acts mentions a number of people who joined Paul in Macedonia, Timothy is mentioned as one out of a group of seven, this time without Silas or Erastes.⁵⁸

From the letters of Paul Timothy's role appears to have been that of a close aide. Paul sends him to the Corinthians to bring 1 Corinthians (cf. 4:17; 16:10), and he is mentioned as co-author in the opening formulae of 2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1 and Phlm. 1.⁵⁹ In Phil. 2:19 Paul

⁵⁵ On 2 Thessalonians as a pseudepigraphous letter, see M.J.J. Menken, *2 Thessalonians*, London/New York 1994, pp. 11-66; L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *The Antecedents of Antichrist. A Tradition-Historical Study of the Earliest Christian Views on Eschatological Opponents*, Leiden 1996, pp. 63-68.

⁵⁶ "Silas" is probably the Aramaic form of the name, while "Silvanus" is the Latin version; cf. "Silas," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6, pp. 21-22. For Silas, see Acts 15:22, 27, 32, 40; 16:19, 25, 29; 17:4, 10, 14-15; 18:5.

⁵⁷ The historicity of this report is doubtful, but the matter need not be discussed here for the present purpose.

⁵⁸ It will not be by accident that Paul is accompanied here by a group of seven assistants: this number of envoys mirrors the seven deacons selected among the Greek speaking Jews in Acts 6:1-7.

⁵⁹ The same is the case in 2 Thess. 1:1, but here an unknown author has copied the opening verse of 1 Thessalonians; cf. note 55.

again mentions Timothy as the one whom he will send to the congregation he addresses. Rom. 16:21 contains a remark by Paul on Timothy as his co-worker. It can hardly be by accident that two of the deuterio-Pauline letters are addressed to this Timothy.

1 Cor. 1:1 does not mention Timothy as co-author, but a certain Sosthenes. According to Acts 18:17 this Sosthenes was "leader of the synagogue" in Corinth, ἀρχισυνάγωγος. Unfortunately, this is all the information we have on Sosthenes, whom Paul does not mention any further.

The Book of Acts mentions two persons who apparently worked together with Paul, not just in their proclamation of the gospel, but also as colleagues of his: Aquila and Priscilla (18:2, 18, 26). Paul mentions them himself as Aquila and Prisca in Rom. 16:3 and 1 Cor. 16:19.⁶⁰ According to Acts 18:2 Aquila and Priscilla were Jews struck by Claudius' edict and thus forced to leave Rome. For that reason they had moved to Corinth. After having been instructed by Paul, they even fulfil the task of pointing out the correct version of the gospel to Apollos (Acts 18:26).

The last of Paul's closest associates to be mentioned here is Titus. This early follower of Paul was of Greek descent (Gal. 2:3). Paul included him in the embassy from Antioch to Jerusalem, together with Barnabas (Gal. 2:1). Hence, Titus must have become involved in the missionary enterprise even before Paul and Barnabas broke up. As in the case of Timothy, Paul uses passionate terms when referring to Titus (cf. e.g. 2 Cor. 2:13) and he sends Titus as his aide to inform the congregation of Corinth of his plans (see 2 Cor. 7:6; 12:18).⁶¹ Again, it cannot be by accident that a deuterio-Pauline letter was written after Paul's death purporting to be addressed to Titus.⁶²

This survey of Paul's closest fellow-workers points out that Paul did not perform his mission on his own. On the contrary: he organised a group of fellow-workers, whom he instructed in his view of the gospel. He used their assistance not just to bring the gospel to a new place, but also to have his letters delivered to congregations he had left and to convey new information to them. Acts describes how Prisca and Aquila instructed Apollos, and apparently Timothy and Titus

⁶⁰ The two are also mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:19.

⁶¹ Paul also mentions Titus in 2 Cor. 7:13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23.

⁶² Judging from 2 Tim. 4:10, the author of 2 Timothy was apparently also familiar with the figure of Titus.

were also encouraged by Paul to bring his specific version of the gospel. By organising this group of people around him, Paul formed an infrastructure that enabled his followers to continue his work after his death. It would seem that this element in his ministry, too, was modelled after the example Paul knew of Hellenistic philosophers and their practice of *paideia*.

Conclusion

In the above it was argued that Paul's ministry should be understood in the context of Hellenistic *paideia*. Paul organised a missionary enterprise that aimed to carry out the proclamation of the gospel in a way that is comparable with the instruction given in philosophical schools of antiquity. He, as they, focused on the interpretation of sacred texts containing a revealed truth. As happened in philosophical schools, these texts were read from a hermeneutical position that defined the focus of their reading. He, as they, laid emphasis on his followers' ethical behaviour. The *paideia* model of instruction was present everywhere in Paul's context; he had been instructed in similar fashion as a Pharisee. Next to this, he was familiar with the strategies and styles of Greek philosophers, and he formulated the core of his gospel, the unity of all believers in Christ, in a manner that was influenced by a basic notion from Cynic-Stoic philosophy. By acting as he did and modelling his gospel and its proclamation after the example of the practice of *paideia*, Paul paved the way for an understanding of the Christian gospel as a 'true philosophy'. In sum: Paul not only modelled his missionary enterprise after the example of Hellenistic philosophers, he was not only influenced by these philosophers in his specific formulation of the gospel, but he also stimulated his co-workers to continue his work. Much in the way a PhD-supervisor does with his assistants in modern academia.

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PAULUS UND DIE JESUSTRADITION

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Das Thema der folgenden Überlegungen ist nicht die Frage nach dem sachlichen Verhältnis zwischen der Verkündigung und dem Wirken Jesu von Nazareth einerseits und der Theologie des Apostels Paulus andererseits; es geht auch nicht um die bisweilen unter der ohnehin falschen Alternative diskutierte Frage, ob womöglich nicht Jesus, sondern erst Paulus der wahre "Gründer" des Christentums gewesen sei.¹ Vielmehr soll danach gefragt werden, wieviel Paulus über Leben und Verkündigung Jesu wußte und auf welchem Weg dieses Wissen zu ihm gelangt war.² Ob sein Wissen über Jesus nach unseren Maßstäben "historisch korrekt" zu nennen wäre oder nicht, spielt in diesem Zusammenhang keine Rolle.³

W.G. Kümmel hat betont, Paulus sage zwar wenig über den irdischen Jesus, aber es sei zu erkennen, dass er "nicht nur auf den Auferstandenen, sondern auch auf den mit ihm identischen geschichtlichen Jesus zurücksieht und in dessen Nachfolge stehen will." Der Hinweis Bultmanns, die Rückfrage nach dem historischen Jesus dürfe nicht dazu dienen, das Kerygma zu legitimieren, sei richtig; das heiße aber nicht, dass im Blick auf Jesus jede historische Gewißheit zu verneinen sei. In der

¹ Über diese Frage ist im ersten Drittel des 20. Jh.s oft gestritten worden. G. Lüdemann hat sie erstaunlicherweise wieder belebt (G. Lüdemann, *Paulus, der Gründer des Christentums*, Lüneburg 2001), und D. Wenham nimmt sie im Titel seiner Monographie zumindest als Frage wieder auf (D. Wenham, *Paulus. Jünger Jesu oder Begründer des Christentums?* Autorisierte Übersetzung aus dem Englischen von Ingrid Proß-Gill, Paderborn 1999).

² Vgl. M. Zimmermann/R. Zimmermann, "Zitation, Kontradiktion oder Applikation? Die Jesuslogien in 1 Kor 7,10f. und 9,14: Traditionsgeschichtliche Verankerung und paulinische Interpretation," *ZNW* 87 (1996), pp. 83-100, bes. 83: "Das umfassende Thema 'Jesus und Paulus' hat sich heute zunehmend auf die traditionsgeschichtliche Frage 'Paulus und die Jesus-tradition' zugespitzt."

³ Vgl. dazu K. Scholtissek, "'Geboren aus einer Frau, geboren unter das Gesetz' (Gal 4,4). Die christologisch-soteriologische Bedeutung des irdischen Jesus bei Paulus," in: U. Schnelle/Th. Söding (eds) in Verbindung mit M. Labahn, *Paulinische Christologie. Exegetische Beiträge. Hans Hübner zum 70. Geburtstag*, Göttingen 2000, pp. 194-219, bes. 216: "Paulus hat in seinen Briefen nicht die moderne historisch-kritische Rückfrage nach dem historischen Jesus ... gestellt und diskutiert."

Sache könne man durchaus von einer Konstante zwischen der Verkündigung Jesu und der Botschaft des Paulus sprechen.⁴

1. Zur Forschungsgeschichte

Die beiden möglichen grundsätzlichen Forschungspositionen stehen von vornherein fest: Es wird entweder gesagt, Paulus sei über Jesus vergleichsweise umfassend informiert gewesen, habe jedoch bei der Abfassung seiner Briefe meist keinen Anlaß gesehen, auf Jesustradition zurückzugreifen, da diese ihren Ort in der missionarischen Verkündigung gehabt habe. Oder es wird im Gegenteil erklärt, Paulus habe von Jesu Verkündigung und Wirken tatsächlich nur das vergleichsweise Wenige gewußt, das er in seinen Briefen ausdrücklich erwähne; dabei wäre dann allerdings näher zu prüfen, ob man sich allein auf jene paulinischen Aussagen zu beschränken hat, in denen von Jesus ausdrücklich die Rede ist.

A. Resch hat unter Rückgriff auf ältere Literatur die Vermutung geäußert, Paulus müsse über schriftliche Quellen verfügt haben, "etwa das Urevangelium, die synoptische Grundschrift..., um aus denselben seine christliche Gesamtanschauung und seine historischen Einzelkenntnisse zu schöpfen."⁵ Nötig sei die "Unbefangenheit" gegenüber der Möglichkeit einer vorpaulinischen christlichen Literatur und auch gegenüber der "Möglichkeit gemeinsamer Benützung schriftlicher Quellen durch die Synoptiker und Paulus."⁶ Resch untersucht auf dieser Basis das gesamte Corpus Paulinum und kommt auf eine überaus große Zahl von Bezugnahmen des Paulus auf Logia Jesu und auch auf Worte Johannes des Täufers. Als Ergebnis notiert

⁴ W.G. Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus," in: *id.*, *Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte. Gesammelte Aufsätze 1933-1964*, Marburg 1965, pp. 439-456, bes. 452-453.

⁵ A. Resch, *Der Paulinismus und die Logia Jesu in ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältnis untersucht*, Leipzig 1904, p. 10 (das Buch umfaßt 656 Seiten). Anfang des 20. Jhs gab es zahlreiche Untersuchungen zu diesem Thema; genannt seien folgende Buchtitel: R. Drescher, *Das Leben Jesu bei Paulus*, Giessen 1900; P. Feine, *Jesus Christus und Paulus*, Leipzig 1902; P. Kölbinger, *Die geistige Einwirkung der Person Jesu auf Paulus. Eine historische Untersuchung*, Göttingen 1906; J. Kaftan, *Jesus und Paulus. Eine freundschaftliche Streitschrift gegen die Religionsgeschichtlichen Volksbücher von D. Bousset und D. Wrede*, Tübingen 1906; A. Jülicher, *Paulus und Jesus*, Tübingen 1907; J. Breitenstein, *Jésus et Paul*, Basel 1908; W. Walther, *Pauli Christentum Jesu Evangelium*, Leipzig 1908; Th. Öhler, *Paulus und Jesus. Der Erlöste und der Erlöser. Ein Vortrag*, Basel 1908.

⁶ Resch, *Paulinismus*, p. 27.

er, es sei "die Ableitung des Paulinismus aus einer schriftlichen Hauptquelle und die Identität dieser paulinischen Hauptquelle mit der synoptischen Grundschrift, den Logia Jesu, zu behaupten."⁷ Die Frage, wo Paulus dieser "Grundschrift" begegnet sein könnte, wird, wenn ich recht sehe, von Resch nicht gestellt.

R. Bultmann ist in einem vor allem theologisch wichtigen Aufsatz dem hier diskutierten Problem kurz nachgegangen. Er beantwortet die Frage "Wieweit ist Paulus von Jesus abhängig?" knapp mit der Feststellung, *direkt* sei Paulus gar nicht durch den geschichtlichen Jesus bestimmt; aber auch von einer *indirekten* Abhängigkeit lasse sich "so gut wie gar nicht reden."⁸ Bultmann verweist in diesem Zusammenhang auf Gal. 1:11-12, 18-19: Paulus lege "Wert darauf, daß er erst drei Jahre nach seiner Bekehrung nach Jerusalem gekommen ist, dort nur kurz gewilt hat und nur Petrus und den Herrenbruder Jakobus gesehen hat."⁹ Bultmann nimmt an, dass Paulus ein torakritisches hellenistisches Judenchristentum kennengelernt habe; dafür spreche nicht nur die Verfolgertätigkeit, sondern auch der Gebrauch des κύριος-Titels sowie die—wie Bultmann meint—hellenistischen Charakter tragende Deutung des Herrenmahls in 1 Kor. 10:16.¹⁰ Von der palästinischen Tradition hingegen merke man bei Paulus nicht viel; offensichtlich habe er sie "im wesentlichen ignoriert," wie sich vor allem bei der Diskussion über das Gesetz zeige. Wenn Paulus in 1 Kor. 11:23-25 sowie in 1 Kor. 7:10-11; 9:14 auf Herrenworte verweise und wenn er in 1 Kor. 7:25 ausdrücklich bedaure, hinsichtlich der παρθένοι kein Herrenwort zu haben, dann werde um so klarer, "daß er sonst, wenn er keines zitiert, wo es zu erwarten wäre, keines kennt." Allenfalls in der Paränese des Paulus klinge "die sittliche Mahnung Jesu nach"; aber, so stellt Bultmann am Ende des ersten Abschnitts seines Aufsatzes knapp fest, Jesu Verkündigung ist "für ihn—mindestens im wesentlichen—irrelevant."¹¹

⁷ Resch, *Paulinismus*, p. 639. Die von Resch angenommene "Logia-Grundschrift" ist nicht mit der vermuteten Logienquelle Q zu identifizieren.

⁸ R. Bultmann, "Die Bedeutung des geschichtlichen Jesus für die Theologie des Paulus" (1929), in: *idem, Glauben und Verstehen. Gesammelte Aufsätze* 1, Tübingen 1961, pp. 188-213, hier pp. 188-189. Den Aussagen des Paulus in Gal. 1:18 kommt zweifellos besondere Bedeutung zu; dabei sind sicher auch andere Interpretationen als die von Bultmann gegebene möglich (s.u.).

⁹ S.u. pp. 301-304.

¹⁰ Bultmann, "Bedeutung," p. 189.

¹¹ Bultmann, "Bedeutung," pp. 190-191.

W.G. Kümmel nimmt in einem 1940 erschienenen umfangreichen Aufsatz zunächst eine nahe bei Bultmann stehende Position ein.¹² Er fügt dann aber hinzu, die Briefe des Paulus gäben ja nicht die Missionspredigt wieder; ausgerechnet in der Paränese des an eine ihm unbekannte Gemeinde gerichteten Römerbriefs verwende Paulus aber doch mehrfach Jesusworte, und das sei vielleicht ein Indiz dafür, dass Jesu Worte "eine größere Rolle gespielt haben müssen, als die Briefe uns ahnen lassen."¹³ Allerdings sehe es Paulus nicht als seine Aufgabe an, "weiterzugeben, was er über den geschichtlichen Jesus und seine Worte gehört und überliefert erhalten hat." "Daß Jesus ein Rabbi war, und daß seine Schüler seine Worte tradierten, ist für Paulus offensichtlich nur ein kleiner und durchaus nicht zentraler Teil seiner Christusverkündigung gewesen."¹⁴

Das eigentliche Thema in Kümmels Aufsatz ist freilich, ähnlich wie zuvor bei Bultmann, die Frage nach der sachlichen Beziehung der paulinischen Theologie zur Verkündigung Jesu. Dabei ist es zeitgeschichtlich bedeutsam, dass Kümmel einleitend gegen die These des nationalsozialistischen Ideologen Alfred Rosenberg polemisiert, Paulus habe "das Christentum Jesu verorientalisiert und verjudet."¹⁵

J. Klausner ist in seinem großen Buch *Von Jesus zu Paulus* der hier gestellten Frage nur am Rande nachgegangen. Er meint, Paulus wolle in 2 Kor. 5:16 (εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν) wahrscheinlich sagen, er habe Jesus "zu dessen Lebzeiten gekannt, nur interessiert ihn dies jetzt nicht mehr."¹⁶ Den Vorwurf der Begleiter des irdischen Jesus, er kenne Jesu wahre Lehre doch gar nicht, habe Paulus mit dem Hinweis be-

¹² W.G. Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus," *TBI* 19 (1940), pp. 209-231, bes. 212: Paulus ist "in allen Hauptteilen seines theologischen Denkens nicht direkt von Worten Jesu abhängig."

¹³ Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus."

¹⁴ Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus," p. 213.

¹⁵ Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus," p. 209 unter Verweis auf A. Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, München 1933. Rosenberg bezeichnet hier Paulus als "den eigentlichen Schöpfer" der später von Luther übernommenen und von Rosenberg abgelehnten Gnadenlehre, "womit gesagt sein soll, daß die Kirchen nicht *christlich*, sondern *paulinisch* sind, da doch Jesus fraglos das Eins-Sein mit Gott als Erlösung und Ziel pries, nicht die herablassende Gnadengewährung eines allmächtigen Wesens, dem gegenüber auch die größte menschliche Seele ein reines Nichts darstellte" (pp. 235-236 [Hervorhebungen im Orig.]; ähnlich zuvor pp. 74-75).

¹⁶ J. Klausner, *Von Jesus zu Paulus*, Jerusalem 1950, p. 299. Eine ausführliche kritische Besprechung der 1943 erschienenen englischen Übersetzung des 1939/40 in hebräischer Sprache publizierten Buches bietet W. G. Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus. Zu Joseph Klausners Darstellung des Urchristentums," *Jud* 4 (1948), pp. 1-35.

antwortet, "daß nicht das körperliche Kennen ('dem Fleische nach') das Wesentliche sei, sondern das geistige Kennen, die Offenbarung in der Vision, die ihm zuteil wurde."¹⁷ Die Damaskusvision des Paulus sei überhaupt nicht zu erklären, "wenn Paulus Jesus nicht ein- oder zweimal im Leben gesehen haben sollte"; Klausner belegt diese Annahme allerdings nur mit allgemeinen psychologischen Erwägungen.¹⁸

Einen ausführlichen Überblick vor allem über die neuere Diskussion bietet D. Häußer.¹⁹ Im Blick auf "neuere Entwicklungen und Fragestellungen" verweist er auf drei unterschiedliche Aspekte: Zum einen stelle sich "die Frage nach einer Traditionskontinuität" zwischen Jesus und Paulus, und diese Frage werde von zahlreichen Exegeten positiv beantwortet.²⁰ Zweitens gebe es die "Frage nach dem Weg der Jesustradition zu Paulus"; sie betreffe vor allem das Verhältnis des Paulus zu den Jerusalemer Aposteln und zu den aus Jerusalem vertriebenen Hellenisten.²¹ Drittens stelle sich die "Frage nach dem Inhalt der grundlegenden Verkündigung des Paulus." Häußer nennt zwei Positionen: Nach J.M.G. Barclay sei Paulus "an dem irdischen Jesus nicht uninteressiert," doch seien ihm "allgemeine Charakteristika wichtiger als spezielle Ereignisse gewesen"; Jesus gelte etwa als Beispiel für Gehorsam, Hingabe und Liebe, doch alle weiteren Vermutungen über Bezugnahmen auf Jesustradition blieben angesichts des Befundes in den Briefen hypothetisch. S. Kim und D.C. Allison seien demgegenüber davon überzeugt, dass Paulus in seiner Missionspredigt Jesustradition weitergegeben habe; an diese habe er

¹⁷ Klausner, *Von Jesus zu Paulus*.

¹⁸ Klausner, *Von Jesus zu Paulus*, p. 300.

¹⁹ D. Häußer, *Christusbekenntnis und Jesusüberlieferung bei Paulus*, Tübingen 2006, pp. 1-38.

²⁰ Häußer, *Christusbekenntnis*, pp. 15-19; als Vertreter dieser Position werden W.D. Davies, H. Riesenfeld und B. Gerhardsson, D.L. Dungan, D.C. Allison, D. Wenham, P. Stuhlmacher, S. Kim sowie R. Riesner genannt, als ausdrückliche Kritiker N. Walter und F. Neirynck.

²¹ Häußer, *Christusbekenntnis*, pp. 19-20. Zu dem zuletzt genannten Punkt schreibt er, M. Hengel und A.M. Schwemer sähen sich genötigt, von einem "Pan-Antiochenismus" zu sprechen, der durch die Literatur "geistert." Hengel und Schwemer seien der Auffassung, dass die Jesustradition dem Paulus während seines in Gal. 1:18 erwähnten Aufenthalts bei Petrus vermittelt wurde, aber auch schon vorher in Damaskus; von anderen, unter ihnen A. Dauer, J. Gnilka, J. Becker und K. Berger, werde stärker die Rolle Antiochias betont.

in den Briefen anknüpfen können, ohne sie ausdrücklich wiederholen zu müssen.²²

J. Becker hat im Blick auf unsere Frage zwei methodisch unabdingbare Feststellungen getroffen: Zum einen sei es "methodisch ratsam ... vom Minimum des relativ Gesicherten und nicht vom Maximum des vielleicht noch gerade Wahrscheinlichen auszugehen."²³ Zum andern sei zu beachten, dass die These, Paulus habe in seiner Missionspredigt auf Jesustradition Bezug genommen, keinen Anhalt an den Paulusbriefen habe; dort, wo Paulus an die gemeindegründende Predigt erinnere, zeige sich vielmehr, dass er "exakt das in Erinnerung ruft, was auch sonst in den Briefen steht. Missionsbotschaft und Briefinhalte lassen sich also nicht im genannten Sinn unterscheiden."²⁴

2. Erwägungen zur möglichen Beziehung zwischen Paulus und Jesus

J. Weiß hat, ähnlich wie später J. Klausner, die These vertreten, Paulus müsse Jesus persönlich gekannt haben; andernfalls sei die Bekehrung "psychologisch unvorstellbar."²⁵ Vor allem die Worte in 2 Kor. 5:16b ließen "keine andere Deutung zu" als die, "daß Paulus Jesum persönlich gesehen und gekannt hat"; zwar lege er darauf jetzt keinen Wert mehr, doch er erwähne es deshalb, "weil seine Gegner sich solchen Kennens rühmen."²⁶ Am einfachsten sei die Annahme, dass er Jesus "gesehen und vielleicht auch gehört hat, daß er insbesondere bei seinem 'Leiden' und seiner Kreuzigung irgendwie zugegen gewesen ist." Der Eindruck, den Paulus dabei von Jesus gewann, müsse wohl doch stärker gewesen sein, "als er selber damals sich bewußt geworden ist und als er es später hat zugeben wollen." Nur so sei das "sonst völlig rätselhafte Verhalten *nach* seiner Bekehrung verständlich"—nämlich die Tatsache, dass Paulus sich, wie er in Gal. 1:17

²² Häußer, *Christusbekenntnis*, pp. 20-21. S. dazu D.C. Allison, Jr., "The Pauline Epistles and the Synoptic Gospels: The Pattern of Parallels," *NTS* 28 (1982), pp. 1-32 und S. Kim, "The Jesus Tradition in 1 Thess 4.13-5.11," *NTS* 48 (2002), pp. 225-242. Vgl. ferner die Beiträge bei A.J.M. Wedderburn (ed.), *Paul and Jesus. Collected Essays*, Sheffield 1989.

²³ J. Becker, *Paulus. Der Apostel der Völker*, Tübingen 1989, p. 122.

²⁴ Becker, *Paulus*, p. 125. Er verweist insbesondere auf 1 Thess. 1:9-10 sowie auf 1 Kor. 2:1-5; 11:2, 23-26; 15:1-11; Gal. 1:9; 3:1-5; 4:13-14; 5:21; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 4:1, 6, 11.

²⁵ J. Weiß, *Paulus und Jesus*, Berlin 1909, p. 17.

²⁶ Weiß, *Paulus*, p. 29.

schreibt, nicht etwa darum bemühte, Information über Jesus zu erhalten, sondern dass er im Gegenteil "in die Einsamkeit" ging: "Er wußte genau, um wen es sich handelte."²⁷

E. Rau hat darauf hingewiesen, dass Paulus die torakritische, vermutlich hellenistisch-judenchristliche Gemeinde verfolgt hatte (Gal. 1:13-14), die sich in ihrer Verkündigung und in ihrer religiösen Praxis sicherlich auch auf Jesusüberlieferung bezog, dabei aber vermutlich eine kritische Auswahl traf, wie die lukanische Darstellung der Stephanuspredigt in den Jerusalemer Synagogen erkennen lasse.²⁸

Inwieweit Paulus diese Überlieferung zur Kenntnis nahm und ob er sie womöglich gedanklich reflektierte, können wir allerdings nicht sagen; weder die Paulusbriefe noch die lukanische Darstellung der Verfolgertätigkeit des Paulus geben Hinweise dieser Art. Gleichwohl ist die Annahme grundsätzlich plausibel, dass die "Bekehrung" bzw. Berufung des Verfolgers zum Verkündiger ein Wissen über Jesus voraussetzt; Paulus muß die Botschaft der von ihm Verfolgten zumindest in groben Zügen gekannt haben, wie indirekt aus Gal. 1:13-14 hervorgeht. Dennoch war seine Begegnung mit dem erhöhten Christus vor Damaskus, das "Sehen" des Auferstandenen, nicht so etwas wie ein "Wiedererkennen," sondern Paulus verstand es offensichtlich als eine durch Gottes Handeln herbeigeführte Offenbarung des ihm bis dahin unbekannten Jesus Christus, wie seine Aussagen in 1 Kor. 15:8 und vor allem in 2 Kor. 4:6 (vgl. Gal. 1:15-16) zeigen.

Dem entspricht die lukanische Darstellung des "Damaskus-Erlebnisses." Lukas schildert die Begegnung zwischen Jesus und Paulus völlig anders als etwa das Zusammentreffen der Emmaus-Jünger mit dem Auferstandenen. Zwar erkennen auch diese Jesus zunächst nicht, weil ihre Augen "gehalten" waren; aber angesichts der Geste des Brotbrechens wird ihnen deutlich, dass ihr Herz "in ihnen brannte," als ihnen von dem unerkannten Begleiter die Schrift ausgelegt worden war. Auch der in Damaskus lebende Ananias in Apg. 9:10 weiß sofort, dass es Jesus ist, der ihn ἐν ὀνόματι anspricht; er kann Jesus sogar darüber "informieren," was jener Mann "mit Namen Saulus aus Tarsus," dem er die Hände auflegen soll, im

²⁷ Weiß, *Paulus*, pp. 30-31. Weiß' Analyse von 2 Kor. 5:16 findet sich pp. 24-27.

²⁸ E. Rau, *Von Jesus zu Paulus. Entwicklung und Rezeption der antiochenischen Theologie im Urchristentum*, Stuttgart 1994, pp. 15-35, unter Verweis auf Apg. 6:8-15.

Schilde führt (9:12-14). Paulus vor Damaskus muß hingegen fragen, wer es denn ist, der da zu ihm sagt: "Was verfolgst du mich?"

3. Der Textbefund in den paulinischen Briefen

a. Herrenworte bei Paulus

Dass Paulus Worte Jesu kennt und sie als solche zitiert, bedarf angesichts von 1 Kor. 7:10-11 und 9:14 keiner näheren Erläuterung.²⁹ Wo sich bei Paulus darüber hinaus "Anspielungen" auf Jesusworte finden, ohne dass ausdrücklich zitiert wird, ist allerdings höchst umstritten. D.C. Allison etwa rechnet mit einer großen Zahl solcher Anspielungen,³⁰ während umgekehrt N. Walter lediglich innerhalb von Röm. 12:9-21 "ein ganzes Geflecht von Berührungen mit Jesusworten"³¹ findet und ein "ähnliches 'Nest'" in 1 Kor. 4:11-13.³² Walter hebt hervor, in beiden Fällen stünden die verwendeten Jesuslogien im Zusammenhang des Grundbestandes der Bergpredigt; aber, so fügt Walter hinzu, "ob Paulus die Worte in dem Bewußtsein gebraucht, daß es sich um *Jesus*-Worte handelt," lasse sich nicht sagen.³³

S. Kim³⁴ findet in 1 Thess. 5:1-11 Anspielungen auf wenigstens vier Jesusworte. Dies sei zum einen das auf die Parusie bezogene Wort vom "Dieb in der Nacht" (1 Thess. 5:2), das auf Lk. 12:39-40/Mt. 24:43-44 zurückgehe; es sei zum andern die in Lk. 21:34-36 ausgesprochene und ähnlich nochmals in Lk. 12:36-38 belegte Mahnung zur Wachsamkeit (1 Thess. 5:6); die Warnung vor "Trunkenheit und Schlaf" (1 Thess. 5:6, 10) schließlich erinnere an die Parabel in Lk. 12:41-48/Mt. 24:45-51. Berücksichtige man darüber hinaus auch die Aussagen über den λόγος κυρίου in 1 Thess. 4:15-17, so zeige sich, dass Paulus im Ersten Thessalonicherbrief in relativ großem Umfang

²⁹ Vgl. dazu Zimmermann/Zimmermann, "Zitation," sowie die dort erwähnte Literatur.

³⁰ Allison, "Pauline Epistles," *passim*.

³¹ N. Walter, "Paulus und die urchristliche Jesustradition," *NTS* 31 (1985), pp. 498-522, bes. 501 sieht Beziehungen zwischen Röm. 12:14 und Lk. 6:28a bzw. Mt. 5:44b; ferner zwischen Röm. 12:17a und Lk. 6:29 bzw. Mt. 5:39b-41; sowie zwischen Röm. 12:18 und Mk. 9:50 bzw. Mt. 5:9 sowie Röm. 12:19-21 und Lk. 6:27a, 36 bzw. Mt. 5:44.

³² Walter, *ibid.*, sieht Beziehungen zwischen 1 Kor. 4:11a und Lk. 6:21a bzw. Mt. 5:6 sowie zwischen 1 Kor. 4:12b-13 und Lk. 6:22-23 bzw. Mt. 5:11-12 und Lk. 6:27-28.

³³ Walter, *ibid.*

³⁴ Kim, "Jesus Tradition."

Jesustradition benutzt hat, während der Brief andererseits ja kein einziges Schriftzitat enthält.

Aber die Formulierungen in 1 Thess. 5:1-11 enthalten keinen Hinweis darauf, dass Paulus eine der Aussagen in diesem Text bewußt mit Jesustradition in Verbindung gebracht hätte. Und für die ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου gesprochenen Worte in 4:15b-17 gilt zum einen, dass sie jedenfalls nicht in der uns bekannten Jesusüberlieferung zu finden sind; vor allem aber zeigt die von Paulus gebrauchte Wendung, dass die Aussage gar nicht als "Herrenwort" im Sinne von 1 Kor. 7:10 usw. verstanden werden soll, sondern als eine Verheißung für die Adressaten, die in der Vollmacht des κύριος gesprochen ist.

b. Erzählende Jesusüberlieferung bei Paulus

Kennt Paulus Erzählungen über Jesus? N. Walter meint, die Paulusbriefe ließen "keinerlei Kenntnis der erzählenden Jesusüberlieferung erkennen." Einzige Ausnahme seien möglicherweise die Abendmahlsworte in 1 Kor. 11:23-25; aber, so fügt Walter hinzu, dieser Text stammt "aus liturgisch-ritueller Tradition" und hat "insofern eine Sonderstellung."³⁵ Demgegenüber betont etwa U. Schnelle, die paulinischen Briefe seien "mit narrativen Elementen und Bezugnahmen durchzogen, die gleichermaßen die Geschichte des irdischen Jesus wie seine Auferstehung und Parusie thematisieren." Als Belege nennt er neben 1 Kor. 11:23b-25 vor allem 1 Kor. 15:3b-5 sowie Phil. 2:6-11; Gal. 4:4, verbunden damit Röm. 1:3 und Röm. 8:3.³⁶ Paulus, so meint Schnelle, "setzt in seinen Briefen eine Kenntnis der Jesus-Christus-Geschichte durch die Gemeinden voraus und nimmt durchgehend auf sie Bezug."³⁷ Läßt sich diese These tatsächlich verifizieren?

(1) In Röm. 1:3-4 wird eine vermutlich vorpaulinische "Formel" zitiert. Aus dem Hinweis auf die Herkunft Jesu ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα wird bisweilen abgeleitet, dass Paulus von der davidischen Herkunft Jesu bzw. des Joseph gewußt habe. Denkbar ist allerdings, dass die Wendung ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ als eine implizite Mes-

³⁵ Walter, "Paulus," p. 503.

³⁶ U. Schnelle, *Paulus. Leben und Denken*, Berlin 2003, pp. 98-99.

³⁷ Schnelle, *Paulus*, p. 99 unter Verweis auf E. Reinmuth, "Narratio und argumentatio. Zur Auslegung der Jesus-Christus-Geschichte im Ersten Korintherbrief," *ZThK* 92 (1995), pp. 13-27.

siasbezeichnung zu gelten hat, obwohl David bei Paulus sonst als Psalmsänger erwähnt wird (Röm. 4:6; 11:9). Aber jedenfalls ist aus Röm. 1:3 bzw. aus der dort verwendeten Tradition nicht mehr abzuleiten als das explizit Gesagte—nämlich eben die, möglicherweise theologisch, nicht genealogisch zu verstehende Aussage über Jesu Herkunft “aus dem Samen Davids nach dem Fleisch,” ohne dass damit weiteres Wissen über Jesu Familie verbunden sein müsste.

(2) Erheblich größeres Gewicht kommt der in *1 Kor. 11:23-25* enthaltenen Abendmahlsüberlieferung zu; hier erwähnt Paulus ausdrücklich, dass er eine den Adressaten bereits bekannte Tradition im Wortlaut zitiert, die auf den κύριος zurückgeht. Zwar mag es sich dabei um eine “kultgebundene Einzelüberlieferung” handeln;³⁸ aber die ganze Argumentation des Paulus in *1 Kor. 11:17-34* lässt nicht erkennen, dass die einzelnen Aussagen innerhalb dieser Überlieferung lediglich isoliert zu hören wären. Es ist wenig wahrscheinlich, dass die “Abendmahlsworte” während der gemeindlichen Mahlfeier regelmäßig rezitiert wurden: Zum einen hätte Paulus darauf ausdrücklich hingewiesen, und er hätte zum andern wohl nicht gemeint, schon die bloße Erinnerung an die tradierten Worte könne ein entscheidender Beitrag zur Klärung der Probleme in der korinthischen Gemeinde sein.³⁹ Ganz offensichtlich ist über den bloßen Wortlaut dieser Überlieferung hinaus Hintergrundwissen vorausgesetzt, und nach diesem soll jetzt gefragt werden.

(2a) Schon die Eingangswendung in *V. 23b* (ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἣ παρεδίδοτο ...) setzt sowohl beim Autor des Briefes als auch vermutlich bei dessen Adressaten das Wissen voraus, dass hier von einem historischen Ereignis die Rede ist. Die Zeitangabe νυκτί ist wohl nicht symbolisch zu verstehen, sondern sie verweist auf ein Geschehen, das sich nach Aussassung der Tradenten tatsächlich in einer bestimmten Nacht vollzogen hatte. Nicht eindeutig zu klären ist, wie die Wendung παρεδίδοτο aufzufassen ist: Steht im Hintergrund eine Kenntnis der auf Judas zurückgehenden “Übergabe,” also des “Verrats” Jesu? Ist die passivische Formulierung παρεδίδοτο zu verstehen im Sinne der “Auslieferung” des κύριος durch Gott? Oder

³⁸ So Becker, *Paulus*, p. 121.

³⁹ So auch H.J. de Jonge, *Avondmaal en symposium. Oorsprong en eerste ontwikkeling van de vroege christelijke samenkomst*, Leiden 2007, pp. 6-7. De Jonge verweist als wesentliches Argument auch auf die Mahlgebete der Didache, die sich auf das Abendmahl beziehen, ohne einen Hinweis auf die “Abendmahlsworte” erkennen zu lassen.

ist möglicherweise überhaupt nicht ein bestimmtes logisches Subjekt zu ergänzen, d.h. bleibt die handelnde Person bewußt ungenannt? Letzteres scheint mir die nächstliegende Erklärung zu sein.⁴⁰

(2b) In V. 24-25 folgt die Schilderung des eigentlichen Mahlgeschehens, damit verbunden die "Deuteworte" Jesu. Diejenigen, die diese Worte kennen, wissen also, dass es am letzten Abend vor der "Auslieferung" Jesu eine Mahlzeit gab, in der Jesus mit den Worten τοῦτό μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν hinsichtlich des Brotes und ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι hinsichtlich des Kelches seinem Tod eine soteriologische Deutung gab; dass Jesus dabei zu anderen sprach, wird nicht ausdrücklich gesagt, doch dürfte es vorausgesetzt sein, ohne dass der Status dieser "anderen" näher expliziert wäre. Die Adressaten bzw. Tradenten der Mahlworte wissen natürlich auch, dass Jesu "Auslieferung" tatsächlich zu seinem Tod führte; dass dieser Tod ein Kreuzestod war, wird nicht gesagt, aber das entsprechende Wissen ist im Kontext jedenfalls der paulinischen Gemeinden, zumal im Falle von Korinth, als gegeben anzunehmen.

(2c) Der dann in V. 26 ergänzend angefügte, von Paulus selber formulierte Nachsatz über die Verkündigung des Todes Jesu bis zur Parusie (τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου καταγγέλλετε ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ) spricht indirekt natürlich von der Auferstehung des κύριος.

So setzen also die in 1 Kor. 11:23-25(26) zitierten Mahlworte ein Wissen um das Passionsgeschehen voraus, das über die bloße Kenntnis des Kreuzestodes Jesu hinausgeht; weitere Details etwa der in den Evangelien erkennbaren Passionsüberlieferung scheinen allerdings nicht bekannt zu sein.

(3) Auch in 1 Kor. 15:3-5(7) liegt ein ausdrücklich als wörtlich zitierte Tradition bezeichneter Text vor. Auf die zahlreichen unterschiedlichen Analysen und insbesondere auf die Versuche, den Entstehungsort des Textes und auch dessen ursprüngliche Sprache zu bestimmen, ist hier nicht einzugehen.⁴¹ Vielmehr soll im vorliegen-

⁴⁰ J. Schröter, *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament. Studien zur urchristlichen Theologiegeschichte und zur Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, Tübingen 2007, p. 90 verweist darauf, dass die Tradition der Abendmahlsworte "sich—jedenfalls in dieser Form—nicht auf den irdischen Jesus zurückführen lässt, sondern eine urchristliche Reminiszenz an die Bedeutung des letzten Mahles darstellt." Paulus allerdings wird die Worte als einen historisch zuverlässigen Bericht angesehen haben.

⁴¹ Vgl. dazu H. Conzelmann, "Zur Analyse der Bekenntnisformel 1. Kor. 15,3-5" (1965), in: *id.*, *Theologie als Schriftauslegung. Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*, München 1974, pp. 131-141; H.J. de Jonge, "Visionary Experience and the Historical Origins of Christianity," in: R.

den Zusammenhang gefragt werden, welche Jesus betreffenden "Fakten" in diesem von Paulus einleitend (V. 1) als "Evangelium" (εὐαγγέλιον) bezeichneten Textstück ausgesagt werden.

(3a) Die Person, um die es geht, wird als Χριστός bezeichnet. Wer damit gemeint ist, wird als bekannt vorausgesetzt; vermutlich hat Paulus das artikellose Wort Χριστός eher als Eigennamen denn als einen Titel aufgefaßt (vgl. Röm. 10:4), zumal sich dieser Sprachgebrauch auch im weiteren Fortgang von 1 Korinther 15 an vielen Stellen findet.

(3b) Ausgesagt werden vier "Sachverhalte": Christus ist *gestorben* (ἀπέθανεν). Er wurde *begraben* (ἐτάφη). Er ist *auferweckt worden* (ἐγήγερται, sc. von Gott). Er ist einer bestimmten Person, nämlich dem Kephas, *erschienen* (ᾤφθη Κηφᾶ). Die an erster und an dritter Stelle genannten 'Sachverhalte' ("gestorben," "auferweckt") werden jeweils auf zweifache Weise näher expliziert: Das *Sterben* des Χριστός geschah erstens *für unsere Sünden* (ὕπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν), und zweitens *gemäß der Schrift* (κατὰ τὰς γραφάς). Die *Auferweckung* des Χριστός geschah erstens *am dritten Tage* (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ), und zweitens ebenfalls *gemäß der Schrift* (κατὰ τὰς γραφάς). Diese Formulierungen zeigen, dass nicht die "Sachverhalte" als solche—also das Sterben und die Auferweckung des Χριστός—entscheidend sind, sondern der mit dem "Sachverhalt" jeweils verknüpfte Schriftbezug. Von einem näheren Wissen um die Passions- und Osterüberlieferung etwa im Sinne der synoptischen Tradition ist dabei allerdings nichts zu erkennen. Das gilt insbesondere auch für die an zweiter und an vierter Stelle stehenden Aussagen: Das ἐτάφη verweist nicht auf ein Wissen vom (leeren) Grab; das ᾤφθη Κηφᾶ läßt einen Rückgriff auf eine *Erscheinungserzählung* nicht erkennen, was freilich insofern durchaus der Evangelientüberlieferung entspricht, als von der Erscheinung vor Petrus ja auch dort nicht *erzählt* wird.⁴² Vorausgesetzt wird aber, dass die Tradenten (und ebenso auch die Rezipienten) wissen, wer Kephas ist; dass dies in Korinth tatsächlich der Fall ist, zeigen die Existenz der "Petruspartei" und auch die Aussage des Paulus in 1 Kor. 9:5.

Bieringer/V. Koperski/B. Lataire (eds), *Resurrection in the New Testament. Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, Leuven 2002, pp. 35-54, bes. 37-48.

⁴² Zur Problematik des besonderen Gewichts, das in der Regel den Aussagen über die "Erscheinung" des Auferstandenen zugesprochen wird, vgl. den in n. 41 genannten Aufsatz von de Jonge.

(3c) Die in V. 5b erwähnte Gruppe der "Zwölf," also das absolut gebrauchte οἱ δώδεκα, begegnet außerhalb der synoptischen Evangelien nur noch in Apg. 6:2. Ob Paulus annimmt, die Adressaten in Korinth würden mit der Nennung dieser Gruppe die Vorstellung verbinden, es handele sich um die Begleiter des irdischen Jesus, läßt sich nicht sagen.

(3d) Auf welches Ereignis sich die in V. 6a erwähnte Erscheinung "vor mehr als 500 Brüdern auf einmal" (ὧσθ' ἐπάνω πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς ἐφάπαξ) beziehen könnte, ist ganz unklar. Man kann überdies fragen, ob V. 6a immer schon zu dem zitierten εὐαγγέλιον gehört hat; die in V. 6b hinzugefügte Erläuterung ist jedenfalls gewiß nicht als Teil der "festen Tradition" anzusehen.⁴³

D. Häußer hat vorgeschlagen, hier sei "eine Verbindung zu dem in Mt 28,16ff. berichteten Geschehen zu erwägen." Es sei "historisch sehr gut denkbar, dass zusammen mit den 'Zwölf' auch andere Jünger aus Jerusalem nach Galiläa gingen," wobei man nicht zuletzt an die vielen aus Galiläa stammenden Jerusalempilger denken dürfe. In Mt. 28:16-17 seien ja zwei unterschiedliche Gruppen genannt: Von der einen Gruppe, den ἐνδεκα μαθηταί, werde gesagt, dass sie den Auferstandenen "anbeteten" (καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν προσκύνησαν), über "die anderen" dagegen werde gesagt, dass sie gezweifelt hätten (οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν). Von zwei Gruppen müsse deshalb die Rede sein, da "wahre Anbetung und Zweifel sich gegenseitig ausschließen." Es komme hinzu, dass Mt. 28:16 usw. nicht von der chronologisch ersten Erscheinung spreche, denn die in Lk. 24:13-34 geschilderte Erscheinung in bzw. bei Jerusalem sei ja vorausgegangen.⁴⁴

Diese Annahmen haben nun freilich alle Wahrscheinlichkeit gegen sich: Zum einen läßt Mt. 28 nicht erkennen, dass es sich bei den "elf Jüngern" (28:16), die gemäß der Weisung Jesu in 28:7 bzw. 26:32 nach Galiläa gingen, in Wahrheit um "mehr als 500 Brüder" gehandelt haben könnte. Noch problematischer ist die Annahme, Matthäus habe mit seiner Bemerkung in 28:17 sagen wollen, dass von diesen nur "die elf Jünger" den Auferstandenen "anbeteten," während alle anderen "zweifel-

⁴³ Aus der Notiz, dass die meisten dieser fünfhundert Brüder noch leben, wird bei M. Hengel/A.M. Schwemer, *Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien. Die unbekannten Jahre des Apostels*, mit einem Beitrag von E.A. Knauf, Tübingen 1998, p. 438, gefolgert, dass Paulus "neuere Informationen aus Jerusalem besitzt, d.h. mit der Gemeinde dort trotz aller Spannungen indirekt oder direkt in Verbindung stand." Wie man sich derartige Informationen über die Lebensdaten der fünfhundert Brüder konkret vorstellen soll, erfährt man leider nicht.

⁴⁴ Häußer, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 134.

ten.”⁴⁵ In höchstem Maße methodisch fragwürdig ist schließlich die von Häußer vorgenommene chronologische Harmonisierung von Lk. 24:13-34 mit Mt. 28:6-20. Es muß also bei der Feststellung bleiben, dass es für das in 1 Kor. 15:6a erwähnte Geschehen keinerlei weitere Belege gibt.

(3e) Die in V. 7 folgende, offensichtlich analog zu V. 5 formulierte Notiz über die Erscheinung vor Jakobus und “allen Aposteln” setzt voraus, dass man weiß, wer dieser “Jakobus” ist. Sehr wahrscheinlich ist der in Gal. 1:19 erwähnte Bruder Jesu gemeint (vgl. den Hinweis auf die ἀδελφοὶ τοῦ κυρίου in 1 Kor. 9:5); aber näheres Detailwissen muß damit nicht verbunden sein.⁴⁶

Ergebnis: Die in 1 Kor. 15:3b-5(7) zitierte Formel spricht vom Tod und von der Auferweckung Jesu; weiteres Wissen über den vor-österlichen Jesus läßt sie nicht erkennen. Immerhin sprechen die Erwähnung der “mehr als fünfhundert Brüder” sowie das Stichwort “alle Apostel” für die Annahme, dass die (offenbar erweiterte) Formel ein vergleichsweise rasches Anwachsen der Gemeinde voraussetzt.

(4) Die Aussage in Gal. 4:4-6 wird gelegentlich als eine “biographische” Notiz über Jesus angesehen. Die beiden partizipialen Aussagen in V. 4b (... γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον) besagen, dass der von Gott gesandte Sohn als Mensch, und zwar als Jude geboren wurde. Die einleitende Wendung ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ setzt vermutlich den Präexistenzgedanken voraus.⁴⁷

D. Häußer folgert aus Gal. 4:4, Paulus habe “eine Kenntnis von den hinter Lk stehenden Traditionen und Vorstellungen gehabt”; es könnte ihm eine (schriftliche oder mündliche) Jesustradition vorgelegen haben, “die auch über Jesu Geburt berichtete.” Gehe man von dieser Annahme aus, so dürfe man auch einen Bezug zur Tradition der Jungfrauengeburt für möglich halten.⁴⁸ Überhaupt sieht Häußer in Gal. 4:4 “wichtige Aspekte der Geschichte Jesu” ausgesagt; er fügt

⁴⁵ Vgl. W.D. Davies/D.C. Allison, Jr., *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew* 3, Edinburgh 1997, pp. 681-682: Mt. sage, dass “some [of the disciples] doubted”.—andere Auslegungen werden mit klarer Argumentation zurückgewiesen.

⁴⁶ Vgl. dazu W. Pratscher, *Der Herrenbruder Jakobus und die Jakobustradition*, Göttingen 1987, pp. 30-48, bes. p. 48: Es ist wahrscheinlich, dass “V. 7 in rivalisierender Tendenz dem selbst aber unpolemischen V. 5 nachgebildet wurde, um gegenüber Petrus den Herrenbruder Jakobus ins Zentrum zu rücken.”

⁴⁷ An eine Sendung im Sinne von Joh. 1:6 (ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ) ist wohl nicht zu denken.

⁴⁸ Häußer, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 327.

hinzu: "Theoretisch könnte diese auch nach V. 4 fortgeführt werden, aber die Formel bricht beim Stichwort νόμος die Jesusgeschichte ab, um zwei Finalsätze anzuschließen."⁴⁹

Nun zeigt aber Gal. 4:5, warum gerade der zweite Aspekt in 4:4 (γενόμενος ὑπὸ νόμον) betont wird: Ziel der Sendung des Sohnes Gottes als Mensch "unter dem Gesetz" war es, dass er "die unter dem Gesetz stehenden Menschen loskaufe" (ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ), wobei die Fortsetzung (ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν) deutlich macht, dass der in V. 1 eingeführte Gegensatz von "Sohn" und "Sklave" im Blick ist. Die Rede vom τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου in V. 4a besagt dann, dass sich "die Zeit," die zur "Sohnschaft" führen sollte, durch Gottes Sendung seines Sohnes "erfüllte," damit "wir" "die Sohnschaft" im Sinne von V. 1 empfangen sollten (V. 5). Als Kennzeichen der neuen Existenz in dieser υἰοθεσία erscheint dann in V. 6 der Ruf ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ. Diese Anrede an Gott entspricht jener Wendung, die sich in der Jesusüberlieferung findet (Mk. 14:36); aber der Zusammenhang bei Paulus (ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν) zeigt, dass der Apostel das ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ offenbar nicht vom irdischen Jesus herleitet.

(5) Auch in *Phil.* 2:6-11 werden bisweilen Bezugnahmen auf das irdische Leben Jesu gesehen. D. Häußler meint, in V. 6-8 liege möglicherweise eine Anspielung auf die synoptische Versuchungsgeschichte vor, insofern Jesus hier wie dort bewußt den Weg der Niedrigkeit gehe.⁵⁰ Vor allem aber gebe es eine starke Verbindung mit dem Jesuswort in Mk. 10:45: ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν. "Die vielfältigen Beziehungen zwischen den verschiedenen Begriffen und Aussagen in Phil 2:6-8 und Mk 10:45 belegen eine direkte Anknüpfung der vorpaulinischen Tradition an das Jesuslogion."⁵¹

Aber Häußlers Interpretation setzt voraus, dass die Aussagen in Phil. 2:6 auf den irdischen Jesus bezogen sind, was angesichts der Wendungen ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων sowie οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο

⁴⁹ Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 307.

⁵⁰ Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 251: "Die Aussagen in Phil 2,6-8 über Jesu Verzicht, seine Gottgleichheit zu seinem eigenen Vorteil auszunutzen, und über Jesu Selbsterniedrigung (V. 8a) und sein Dienersein (V. 7b) legen eine (zumindest indirekte) Verbindung zur Versuchungsgeschichte nahe."

⁵¹ Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 256 (im Original kursiv).

τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ zumindest unwahrscheinlich ist.⁵² Jedenfalls läßt sich Jesu in den Versuchungserzählungen in Mt. 4:1-11 bzw. Lk. 4:1-13 geschildertes Verhalten gegenüber dem Teufel nicht in den Kategorien von Phil. 2:6 erklären. Und wenn Häußler feststellt, dass die Worte θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ am Ende von V. 8 "selbstverständlich auch eine Assoziation zum Bericht von der Kreuzigung Jesu" wecken, so geht das weit über das tatsächlich im Text Erkennbare hinaus; Häußler fügt denn auch hinzu, die "Anknüpfung" an diesen Bericht werde "nicht weiter entfaltet und hat so kein eigenes Gewicht."⁵³ Wäre die genannte Argumentation plausibel, dann ließen sich alle Erwähnungen des Kreuzes Jesu bei Paulus als "Anknüpfungen" an den Passionsbericht deuten.

Im Blick auf das Logion Mk. 10:45, das Häußler, wie auch viele andere Exegeten, auf Jesus selber zurückführt, sieht er die entscheidenden Parallelen zum einen in dem hier wie dort begegnenden οὐκ—ἀλλά, und zum andern in einer Berührung des Begriffs υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου mit der Wendung ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος in Phil. 2:7. Eine "Analogie" bestehe zwischen der Wendung διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ in Mk. 10:45 und der Aussage ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν ... γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου in Phil. 2:7, 8. Möglich sei darüber hinaus auch, dass λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν und θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ miteinander in Beziehung stehen.⁵⁴ Aber in Phil. 2:6-7 ist von der Selbsterniedrigung des Präexistenten die Rede, in Mk. 10:45 dagegen von der irdischen Praxis des gekommenen Menschensohnes;⁵⁵ die Aussagen in Phil. 2:6-8 lassen sich nicht mit Überlieferung vom Leben Jesu in Verbindung bringen.

(6) In *1 Thess. 2:14-16* spricht Paulus von Verfolgungen, die die (Heiden-)Christen in Thessalonich von ihren Mitbürgern (ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων συμφυλετῶν) in gleicher Weise erfahren hätten wie die (juden-)christlichen Gemeinden in Judäa von den Juden (V. 14); diese, so fährt Paulus in V. 15 fort, hätten Jesus getötet und auch die Prophe-

⁵² Da in Phil. 2:7b-8 von der Menschwerdung die Rede ist, spricht alles dafür, dass V. 6 vom Präexistenten spricht, der (V. 7) in der "Kenosis" Knechtsgestalt annahm, indem er Mensch wurde.

⁵³ Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 259.

⁵⁴ Vgl. die Übersichtsskizze bei Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 258.

⁵⁵ Demgegenüber meint Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, p. 350 dem Logion Mk. 10:45 par. komme "eine herausragende Rolle für die von Paulus rezipierten urchristlichen Bekenntnis—bzw. katechetischen Texte" zu—es bestünden Verbindungen zu 1 Korinther 15, Philipper 2 und Galater 4.

ten. Hier deutet sich offenbar das Wissen an, dass judäische, also Jerusalemer Juden am Prozeß und an der Hinrichtung Jesu beteiligt gewesen waren,⁵⁶ ohne dass die Aussage jedoch genauere Informationen erkennen läßt. Im Hintergrund steht vor allem auch die deuteronomistische Tradition über das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten in Judäa (= Jerusalem).

c. *Ergebnis*

D. Häußler stellt in seiner Studie abschließend fest, Paulus habe „mit Sicherheit“ die Abendmahlsworte, das Lösegeldwort Jesu und damit auch Jesu Selbstbezeichnung als „Menschensohn“ gekannt, ferner die Überlieferung von Jesu Kreuzigung und Begräbnis sowie von der Auffindung des leeren Grabes und mehreren Erscheinungen. „Wahrscheinlich“ habe Paulus die Jesus-Logien über „Erniedrigung und Erhöhung“ (z.B. Lk. 14:11) gekannt, ebenso Worte, die von Jesus als dem Gesandten bzw. vom Gekommensein Jesu sprechen, ferner die Überlieferung von der Versuchung und das in Mk. 12:35-37 parr überlieferte Streitgespräch zur Frage „Gottessohn oder Davidssohn“; dasselbe gelte für die Überlieferung vom Prozeß Jesu, „einschließlich Jesu Selbstbekenntnis vor dem Hohen Rat.“ Für immerhin „möglich“ hält es Häußler, dass Paulus Kenntnis von Teilen der lukanischen Kindheitsgeschichte sowie der Leidensankündigungen und des Winzergleichnisses besaß.⁵⁷

Das aber geht weit über das tatsächlich Erkennbare hinaus. „Sicher“ ist natürlich, dass Paulus einige Jesuslogien kannte, die er ausdrücklich als solche zitiert; sie lassen freilich kein bestimmtes Überlieferungsprofil erkennen. Über die unmittelbar mit Jesu (Kreuzes)Tod verbundenen Sachverhalte war Paulus entsprechend den in 1 Kor. 11:23-25 und 15:3-7 zitierten Texten informiert, denn diese Aussagen setzen ungeachtet ihres formelhaften Charakters ja ein gewisses „Hintergrundwissen“—nicht zuletzt auch im Blick auf die beteiligten Personen⁵⁸—voraus. Das Wissen, dass Jesus Jude war, ist

⁵⁶ Mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit sind in 1 Thess. 2:14-16 nicht „die Juden“ gemeint, sondern—wie aus der geographischen Angabe in V. 14 hervorgeht—die Juden in Judäa. Vgl. V. Furnish, *1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians*, Nashville 2007, pp. 68-74.

⁵⁷ Häußler, *Christusbekenntnis*, pp. 351-352. Ähnlich Wenham, *Paulus*, pp. 122-123.

⁵⁸ Es handelt sich freilich nur um Kephas/Petrus und um den Herrenbruder Jakobus; von den in 1 Kor. 9:5 erwähnten „Brüdern des Herrn“ weiß Paulus aufgrund der Missionsgeschichte, und welches Wissen er von „den Zwölf“ besaß, können wir gar nicht sagen.

eine Selbstverständlichkeit; insofern enthält die Aussage in Gal. 4:4 keine "Information," sondern sie ist Teil der auf das Thema νόμος bezogenen Argumentation. Dass Paulus darüber hinaus weitere Jesusüberlieferung kannte, ist nicht auszuschließen, es läßt sich aber durch nichts belegen.

4. Mögliche Wege von Jesus zu Paulus

Für die Suche nach einer Antwort auf die Frage, wie Paulus mit Jesustradition in Beziehung kam, kommen als Quellen natürlich zuerst die Paulusbriefe in Betracht, dann aber auch die Apostelgeschichte.

a. Beobachtungen in den paulinischen Briefen

(1) Der bei weitem wichtigste Text für die hier zu erörternde Frage ist Gal. 1:11-24, wo Paulus seine "Entwicklung" vom Verfolger zum Verkündiger sowie die Anfangsphase seiner Wirksamkeit als Apostel beschreibt. Welche Informationen lassen sich hier gewinnen?

(1a) Am Anfang steht in V. 11-12 die betont als Mitteilung an die Adressaten (γινώριζω γὰρ ὑμῖν) formulierte Aussage des Paulus, das von ihm verkündigte Evangelium entspreche nicht menschlicher Einsicht (οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον), und es verdanke sich auch nicht menschlicher Überlieferung (οὐδὲ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτό); vielmehr sei er belehrt worden δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Bedeutet diese Feststellung von vornherein, dass Paulus behauptet, keinerlei Jesustradition empfangen zu haben? Der Begriff εὐαγγέλιον bezeichnet in V. 11 offensichtlich nicht einen bestimmten Wortlaut des Evangeliums, sondern die Substanz von dessen Wahrheit. Aber diese Wahrheit ist, wie V. 8-9 gezeigt hatte, durchaus tradierbar, denn dort hatte Paulus das von ihm verkündigte εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (V. 7) sehr wohl als "Tradition" bezeichnet (παρελάβετε). In V. 11-12 sagt Paulus also, dass das Evangelium als verkündigte Wahrheit für ihn nicht Gegenstand einer Unterrichtung oder Unterweisung gewesen war, sondern Inhalt einer Offenbarung (ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

(1b) Das erläutert Paulus näher in V. 13-14: Er hatte, wie die Adressaten bereits wissen (ἠκούσατε γάρ), als Jude (ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ) die "väterlichen Traditionen" verteidigt, weil die Verkündigung der—von Paulus natürlich erst *jetzt* so bezeichneten—ἐκκλησία τοῦ

θεοῦ zu diesen παραδόσεις im Widerspruch stand. Paulus hatte diese ἐκκλησία verfolgt und "zu vernichten getrachtet" (ἐπόρθουν αὐτήν); er deutet nicht an, dass er darum bemüht gewesen wäre, Näheres über Jesus zu erfahren oder dass er Informationen über Jesus erhalten hätte.

(1c) In V. 15-16a spricht Paulus vom erwählenden und berufenden Handeln Gottes; es zeigte sich in der Offenbarung des Sohnes Gottes "an/in mir" (V. 16aα: ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, vgl. V. 12), und er erhielt dabei den Auftrag (V. 16aβ), "ihn [sc. den Sohn Gottes] zu verkündigen unter den Völkern." Welchen Inhalt dieses εὐαγγελίζεσθαι αὐτόν im einzelnen haben sollte, sagt Paulus hier nicht; aber es ist deutlich, dass er mit der Verwendung des Verbs εὐαγγελίζεσθαι sich auf jene Aussagen zurückbezieht, die er zuvor in 1:6-9 und in 1:11-12 unter Verwendung des Substantivs εὐαγγέλιον gemacht hatte und die er dann in 2:1-10, insbesondere in 2:5, weiter ausführen wird.

(1d) In V. 16b.17 folgen die Aussagen, auf die der ganze Gedankengang zielt: Paulus betont, dass er sich "sogleich" (εὐθέως) nicht mit anderen getroffen habe (οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι),⁵⁹ dass er also in seiner Verkündigung von menschlichen Instanzen unabhängig blieb; insbesondere sei er nicht nach Jerusalem gegangen zu den früher berufenen Aposteln (V. 17), d.h. er sah keine Notwendigkeit, Jesustradition zu erhalten.

J.D.G. Dunn meint, die Verwendung des Verbs προσανατίθεσθαι in V. 16b sei zu verstehen als "probably an implicit acknowledgment that the Jerusalem apostles were the appropriate authorities to consult for an interpretation of an important revelation. And while he did not require such validation of his message or ministry from Jerusalem, he did find it necessary after his initial spell in Arabia and Damascus to have more information regarding his new faith."⁶⁰ D. Wenham erklärt, Paulus meine mit seiner Aussage in V. 17 nicht, dass er "nach seiner Bekehrung überhaupt keinen nennenswerten

⁵⁹ A.M. Schwemer, "Verfolger und Verfolgte bei Paulus. Die Auswirkungen der Verfolgung durch Agrippa I. auf die paulinische Mission," in: E.-M. Becker/P. Pilhofer (ed.), *Biographie und Persönlichkeit des Paulus*, Tübingen 2005, pp. 169-191, bes. 188 meint, die Aussage des Paulus, er habe sich nicht an "Fleisch und Blut" gewandt, sei eine "Anspielung auf die Petrus-überlieferung Mt 16,17."

⁶⁰ J.D.G. Dunn, "The Relationship between Paul and Jerusalem according to Galatians 1 and 2," *NTS* 28 (1982), pp. 461-478, bes. 471-472.

Kontakt mit Christen gehabt hätte"; es habe lediglich "kein offizielles Gespräch mit einem der Apostel (oder einem gleichrangigen Christen)" gegeben. Vermutlich, so Wenham weiter, wurde Paulus "als gerade erst Bekehrter unterwiesen und ergriff jede Gelegenheit, um von seinen Mitchristen etwas über Jesus zu erfahren." "Wenig später," so Wenhams Auslegung der in V. 18 folgenden Zeitangabe "nach drei Jahren," lernte Paulus dann Petrus kennen und erhielt so "die Möglichkeit, noch mehr über Jesus zu erfahren."⁶¹

Aber die Aussage in V. 16b-17 über die nicht erfolgte Reise nach Jerusalem ist eindeutig, nicht zuletzt auch aufgrund der ausdrücklichen Erwähnung der "früheren Apostel." Unklar ist dagegen, wie die Aussage ἀπὸ πολλοῦ εἰς Ἀραβίαν im einzelnen zu verstehen ist: Wie lange hielt sich Paulus in Damaskus auf, bevor er von dort nach Arabien ging? Welches Gebiet genau ist mit dieser geographischen Bezeichnung gemeint? Deutlich ist aber jedenfalls, dass Paulus die Reise nach "Arabien" ausdrücklich als die von ihm gewählte Alternative zu einem offenbar auch möglichen Besuch in Jerusalem darstellt.

In "Arabien" könnte Paulus "meditiert," diese Region also bewußt als einen Ort der Einsamkeit gewählt haben. Er könnte dort aber auch missionarisch tätig gewesen sein, ohne dass die in 2 Kor. 11:32-33 geschilderte Flucht aus Damaskus vor der Verfolgung durch den Ethnarchen des Nabatäerkönigs Aretas IV auf eine vorangegangene Missionstätigkeit in dessen Gebiet zurückgeführt werden muß.⁶² Ganz sicher aber ist "Arabien" nicht als ein Ort zu denken, wo Paulus Jesustradition hätte erhalten können. Und wenn er abschließend in V.

⁶¹ Wenham, *Paulus*, p. 357. Er folgert aus den begrifflichen Berührungspunkten zwischen Mt. 16:16-20 und Gal. 1:15-16, Paulus könne das "Felsenwort" gekannt haben, auch wenn die Parallelen "nicht gerade überwältigend" seien (p. 181). Etwas später (p. 192) schreibt er freilich, Paulus habe die "Traditionen von Petrus, dem Fels (Mt 16,16-20)... gekannt, und seine Gegner dürften sie sogar gegen ihn verwendet haben."

⁶² Darauf verweist R. Riesner, *Die Frühzeit des Apostels Paulus. Studien zur Chronologie, Missionsstrategie und Theologie*, Tübingen 1994, pp. 229-231. Vgl. vor allem E.A. Knauf, "Die Arabienreise des Apostels Paulus," in: Hengel/Schwemer, *Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien*, pp. 465-471. Knauf nimmt an, dass mit Arabien das Nabatäerreich gemeint ist, dass Paulus aber dort durchaus in jüdischen Gemeinden missioniert haben könnte. "Folgen hatte die erste Missionsreise des Paulus, von den zwei Briefstellen [Gal 1:17; 2 Kor 11:32-33] abgesehen, offenbar nicht" (p. 470 Anm. 29). Zu der umstrittenen Interpretation der in 2 Kor. 11:32-33 vorausgesetzten politischen Verhältnisse vgl. U. Hackl/H. Jenni/Chr. Schneider, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Nabatäer. Textsammlung mit Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Freiburg/Göttingen 2003, pp. 560-561.

17c sagt, er sei "wiederum zurückgekehrt nach Damaskus," dann bedeutet dies implizit noch einmal: nicht nach Jerusalem.

(1e) Von größter Bedeutung für unser Thema ist die in V. 18 folgende Aussage über den "nach drei Jahren" erfolgenden Besuch in Jerusalem. Die Auslegung ist allerdings heftig umstritten, weil sowohl die Wendung ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν als auch die Zeitangabe ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέραι δεκαπέντε sehr verschieden ausgelegt werden.

Nach J.D.G. Dunn besagt das Verb ἱστορεῖν, dass Paulus seinen Besuch bei Petrus gemacht habe "for the purpose of inquiry"; Dunn schreibt: "That Paul would have had a natural curiosity about this Jesus who had appeared to him outside Damascus is *prima facie* obvious." Aus den unterschiedlichen Aussagen in V. 18 (ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν) und in V. 19 (εἶδον ... Ἰάκωβον) folgert Dunn, dass Paulus bei dem Bruder Jesu nur zu einem kurzen Höflichkeitsbesuch war, "but he used his time with Peter, the one who had been closest to Jesus, to make inquiry, to draw out the sort of information which had not come to him with the apostle-making gospel-giving revelation three years earlier."⁶³ Im Blick auf die hier erörterte Frage stellt Dunn fest: "His visit to Peter ... strongly suggests that it was information about Jesus' pre-Easter ministry which he had in mind, from the one who had been Jesus' most prominent disciple. He freely acknowledges his indebtedness to Peter at this point (1.18)."⁶⁴

Nun läßt aber die Wendung ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν von "indebtedness," also von einer "Dankesschuld," wenig erkennen. Nach O. Hofius erweist der übliche Sprachgebrauch von ἱστορῆσαι τινα die Deutung "to get information from Cephas" als "unhaltbar,"⁶⁵ denn ἱστορῆσαι heiße nichts anderes als "kennenlernen." Hofius fügt hinzu: "Natürlich ist es denkbar (wenn auch nicht beweisbar), daß Paulus sich bei seinem zweiwöchigen Aufenthalt im Hause des Petrus unter anderem auch über Jesu Erdenwirken und seine Verkündigung hat berichten lassen." Aber tatsächlich sage Paulus eher das Gegenteil: "Die äußerst karge Formulierung ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν scheint noch einmal auf ihre Weise das οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι von V. 16 zu unterstreichen: Der Besuch in Jerusalem war von keiner anderen Absicht bestimmt als der, Petrus persönlich kennenzulernen."⁶⁶

⁶³ Dunn, "Relationship," pp. 465-466.

⁶⁴ Dunn, "Relationship," p. 472.

⁶⁵ O. Hofius, "Gal 1,18: ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν," in: *id.*, *Paulusstudien*, Tübingen 1989, pp. 255-267, bes. 261.

⁶⁶ Hofius, "Gal 1,18," p. 267.

Dunn hat in einer Antwort auf Hofius nochmals unterstrichen, das ἱστορῆσαι müsse mehr als ein bloßes "Kennenlernen" umfaßt haben: "Once again we can hardly assume that their conversations never or only rarely touched on Jesus' pre-passion ministry. On the contrary, 'getting to know' Peter must surely have included 'getting to know' Peter's role as Jesus' leading disciple during Jesus' ministry in Galilee." Gerade wenn Paulus bereits Kenntnisse über Jesus besaß, mußte ihm am Erhalt weiterer Informationen "by the most authoritative witness" gelegen gewesen sein.⁶⁷ Aber dies sind nicht mehr als allgemeine Erwägungen, die keineswegs aus dem folgen, was Paulus tatsächlich schreibt.⁶⁸ N. Walter meint, Paulus habe bei seinem Besuch in Jerusalem die Meinung des Petrus darüber einholen wollen, "ob er mit seiner Verkündigung des Evangeliums an die Heiden auf einer Linie liege, die auch nach der Einsicht des Petrus akzeptabel war."⁶⁹ Aber die von Paulus in Gal. 2:1-10 gegebene Darstellung des doch erheblich später stattfindenden "Apostelkonzils" spricht eher gegen die Annahme, es sei bei diesem ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν um jene Themen gegangen, die Paulus in Gal. 2:2 erwähnt und auf die dann die von ihm in 2:7-9 referierte Vereinbarung Bezug nimmt.

Paulus macht in 1:18 erstmals eine (relative) Zeitangabe (ἔπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία), bei der allerdings nicht deutlich ist, auf welchen vorangegangenen Zeitpunkt sie sich bezieht. Klar scheint zu sein, dass die genannten "drei Jahre" als ein vergleichsweise langer Zeitraum aufzufassen, dass sie also im Sinne von "erst nach drei Jahren ging ich nach Jerusalem" zu verstehen sind. Als Zweck seines Aufenthalts nennt Paulus die Begegnung mit Petrus (ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν). Paulus deutet nicht an, dass er die Absicht gehabt habe, in Jerusalem etwas über Jesus zu erfahren. Natürlich ist zu vermuten, dass während des zweiwöchigen Besuchs bei Petrus auch über den irdischen Jesus gesprochen wurde; aber es ist auffällig, dass Paulus den Galatern gegenüber davon nichts schreibt. Setzt er voraus, die Adressaten hätten es für selbstverständlich gehalten, dass er sich mehr als drei Jahre

⁶⁷ J.D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, Edinburgh 1998, p. 188.

⁶⁸ Darauf hatte Walter, "Paulus," p. 506 schon angesichts des von Dunn verwendeten Begriffs "natural curiosity" (s.o.) hingewiesen.

⁶⁹ Walter, "Paulus," p. 507. Walter fügt hinzu, dabei werde dann auch die Frage des Paulus eine Rolle gespielt haben, ob sein Wirken "nicht dem zuwider lief, was Petrus von Jesu eigenem Wirken oder von seinen Worten berichten konnte."

nach dem "Damaskus-Erlebnis," über Jesus informieren ließ? Für diese Annahme fehlen im Text alle entsprechenden Indizien.⁷⁰

Selbst wenn Paulus—ohne dass er dies erwähnt—von Petrus nähere Informationen über Jesus erhielt, so bliebe jedenfalls offen, welcher Art diese Informationen waren. Sollten es einzelne "Logien" gewesen sein oder Schilderungen von Konflikten oder auch von Wundertaten Jesu, wie sie in der später literarisch greifbaren synoptischen Tradition in mehr oder weniger fester Form vorliegen, dann müßte erklärt werden, warum Paulus von solcher Überlieferung einen so überaus geringen Gebrauch macht.

Gelten die "fünfzehn Tage" als ein langer oder als ein kurzer Aufenthalt? Bezogen auf die unmittelbar zuvor genannten "drei Jahre" wirkt die Zeitangabe ἡμέραι δεκαπέντε eher als vergleichsweise kurz. Bei M. Hengel und A.M. Schwemer heißt es, Paulus und Petrus hätten bei diesem—wie Hengel meint: langen—Aufenthalt einander "nicht nur näher kennengelernt, sondern auch voneinander gelernt"; H. Conzelmanns Hinweis darauf, dass Paulus den Inhalt der in Jerusalem geführten "Gespräche" übergehe,⁷¹ wird von Hengel mit der kritischen Bemerkung zitiert, Paulus berichte in seinen Briefen ja "nirgendwo über die heute so beliebten 'Gespräche'".⁷² Eben das ist Conzelmanns Feststellung; es bleibt deshalb unklar, warum es dennoch möglich sein soll, aus Gal. 1:18 Informationen zu gewinnen, die weit über das tatsächlich dort Gesagte hinausgehen.⁷³ J. Frey meint, wenn Paulus "nichts vom Inhalt dieser Gespräche" berichte, so sei daraus nicht abzuleiten, "daß dieselben theologisch unbedeutend gewesen wären"; etwas überraschend folgt dann aber die (rhetorische) Frage: "Wer wollte dies in der dynamischen Frühzeit des Christusklaubens beurteilen?"⁷⁴ die tatsächlich nicht zu beantworten ist,

⁷⁰ Dies wäre umso auffälliger, wenn man annehmen müßte, dass die in Galatien tätigen Gegner des Paulus ihm die unzureichende Kenntnis der Jesusüberlieferung vorgeworfen hätten.

⁷¹ Hengel/Schwemer, *Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien*, p. 231.

⁷² Hengel/Schwemer, *Paulus*, p. 231 Anm. 934. H. Conzelmann, *Geschichte des Urchristentums*, Göttingen 1976, p. 67 schreibt: "Den Inhalt der Gespräche übergeht er, weil er anscheinend für seine eigene Theologie nicht substantiell ist."

⁷³ So halten es Hengel/Schwemer für möglich, dass der Inhalt der viel diskutierten Formel I Kor. 15:3-5 "bei diesem denkwürdigen Besuch verhandelt worden sein" könnte (*Paulus*, p. 233).

⁷⁴ J. Frey, "Paulus und die Apostel. Zur Entwicklung des paulinischen Apostelbegriffs und zum Verhältnis des Heidenapostels zu seinen 'Kollegen'," in: Becker/Pilhofer (ed.), *Biographie*, pp. 192-227, bes. 223.

weshalb man auf eine Überinterpretation von Gal. 1:18 verzichten sollte.

Eine indirekte Information wird man aus Gal. 1:18 freilich ableiten dürfen: Paulus ist als Verfolger offenbar nicht in Jerusalem tätig gewesen, denn dann wäre ein früheres Zusammentreffen mit Petrus wohl unvermeidlich gewesen; die lukanische Darstellung der Konflikte zwischen den Aposteln und den religiösen Autoritäten in Jerusalem läßt jedenfalls nicht erkennen, dass Petrus sich vor seinen Verfolgern versteckt gehalten hätte.

(1f) In V. 19 fügt Paulus ergänzend hinzu, er habe während seines Aufenthalts in Jerusalem keinen anderen der Apostel gesehen, ausgenommen Jakobus. Was dies bedeutet und warum Paulus es erwähnt, läßt sich kaum sagen—jenes οὐκ εἶδον κτλ. kann ja höchst unterschiedliche Gründe haben. Klar ist aber der sachliche Inhalt: Paulus hatte neben dem 14tägigen Aufenthalt bei Petrus und dem "Sehen" des Herrenbruders Jakobus keinerlei Kontakt mit "den Aposteln" (vgl. V. 17: ... πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους). Das könnte bedeuten, dass er kein Interesse daran hatte, mit diesen Augenzeugen des Jesusgeschehens zusammenzutreffen; es könnte auch bedeuten, dass diese sich weigerten, den früheren Verfolger zu sehen, was allerdings angesichts der Begegnungen mit Petrus und mit Jakobus weniger wahrscheinlich ist. Im übrigen deutet Paulus auch in V. 19 mit keinem Wort an, das "Sehen" des Jakobus habe das Ziel gehabt, Information über den irdischen Jesus zu erlangen.

(1g) Die diesen Abschnitt abschließende, geradezu wie ein Eid formulierte Aussage in V. 20 zeigt, dass Paulus offensichtlich von anderslautenden Nachrichten über sein Verhalten nach dem "Damas-kus-Erlebnis" wußte; er hatte Anlaß, sich gegen diese zur Wehr zu setzen und deren Wahrheit zu bestreiten—welchen anderen Grund könnte die so stark betonte Beteuerung οὐ ψεύδομαι sonst haben? Wahrscheinlich bezieht sich das ἃ δὲ γράφω ὑμῖν κτλ. dabei nicht allein auf die unmittelbar vorangehenden Aussagen in V. 19 bzw. in V. 18-19, sondern wohl auf den ganzen in V. 16b beginnenden "autobiographischen" Bericht über die im Anschluß an die Berufung (V. 16a) erfolgten Aktivitäten.

Der von Paulus ausdrücklich bestrittene Geschehensablauf wird in Apg. 9:26 usw. als tatsächlich erfolgt überliefert.⁷⁵ Das bedeutet sicher nicht, dass Lukas bestrebt war, die Bedeutung und die Rolle des Paulus herunterzuspielen; vielmehr erklärt sich der Widerspruch vermutlich einfach damit, dass Lukas eben jene Tradition erhalten hatte, deren Wahrheit Paulus bestreitet, während ihm der Galaterbrief offensichtlich nicht bekannt war.

(1h) Der in V. 21 folgende, von Paulus inhaltlich nicht näher erläuterte kurze Hinweis auf τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας spielt für unsere Fragestellung keine Rolle, auch wenn es natürlich nicht unmöglich ist, dass Paulus dort Informationen über Jesus erhalten haben könnte.

(1i) Von Bedeutung ist aber der Schlußabschnitt V. 22-24: Nach dem in V. 18 erwähnten Besuch in Jerusalem hielt sich Paulus für einen langen Zeitraum (vgl. 2:1) nicht erneut in Judäa auf. Die in diesem Zusammenhang oft diskutierte Frage, ob Paulus bereits früher, d.h. als Verfolger, in Jerusalem gewesen war, läßt sich von V. 22 her nicht beantworten. Paulus beschränkt sich auf die Feststellung, er sei den "Kirchen in Judäa" persönlich nicht bekannt gewesen, sondern diese hätten lediglich davon gehört, dass aus dem Verfolger der Verkündiger geworden war; dies entspricht der aus 1:18 gewonnenen Beobachtung, dass der Verfolger Paulus und der Verkündiger Petrus einander nicht begegnet waren.⁷⁶ Bemerkenswert ist, dass die Aussage in V. 23 aus der Perspektive der genannten Gemeinden formuliert ist (ὁ διώκων ἡμᾶς ποτε κτλ.), die Ergänzung in V. 24 (καὶ ἐδόξαζον ἐν ἑμοὶ τὸν θεόν) ist offenbar von Paulus selber hinzugefügt worden.

⁷⁵ Etwas überraschend ist die Feststellung von Riesner, *Die Frühzeit des Apostels Paulus*, p. 233: "Nach der übereinstimmenden Auskunft des Paulus (Gal. 1,18) und der Apostelgeschichte (Apg. 9,26ff.) ging der Apostel von Damaskus nach Jerusalem." Die beiden Texte setzen ein zeitlich um jedenfalls drei Jahre differierendes Datum für diese Reise voraus, so dass von einer "übereinstimmenden Auskunft" kaum gesprochen werden kann. Nach M. Hengel und A.M. Schwemer könnten die "drei Jahre" tatsächlich eineinhalb bis zwei Jahre gewesen sein (*Paulus zwischen Damaskus und Antiochien*), und wenn Lukas in Apg. 9:23 von ἡμέραι ἱκαναὶ spricht, während derer sich Paulus in Damaskus aufgehalten habe, dann liege das daran, dass er in der ersten Hälfte seines Werkes "kaum exakte Zeitangaben machen konnte ... Die ἡμέραι ἱκαναὶ deuten einfach auf einen unbestimmten, jedoch längeren Zeitraum hin" (p. 216). In Apg. 9:43 kann sich ἡμέραι ἱκαναὶ allenfalls auf Tage, höchstens Wochen beziehen. Die Auskunft, Lukas mache genauere Zeitangaben erst in der zweiten Hälfte seines Werkes, der er "als Augenzeuge näher steht" (Hengel/Schwemer, *Paulus*, p. 216), führt nicht weiter.

⁷⁶ S.o. zu Gal. 1:18.

(2) Die Ausführungen in *Gal. 2:1-10* mit dem Bericht über den "nach vierzehn Jahren" erfolgten Besuch in Jerusalem lassen im Blick auf eine mögliche Vermittlung von Jesustradition gar nichts erkennen. Natürlich könnte man erneut vermuten, dass am Rande des "Apostelkonzils" auch über den irdischen Jesus gesprochen wurde; aber wiederum ist zu beachten, dass die Ausführungen des Paulus davon jedenfalls nichts erkennen lassen.

(3) In *Gal. 2:11-14(21)* schildert Paulus seinen Konflikt mit Petrus in Antiochia. Die syrische Großstadt gilt oft als ein Ort, wo Paulus mit Jesustradition in Berührung gekommen sein könnte. J. Becker betont, es habe "neben Jerusalem keine so herausragende Stadt für das Christentum wie Antiochia" gegeben, da dort die Heidenmission und insofern dann auch das Christentum als eigenständige Religion entstanden sei.⁷⁷ Die bei Paulus erkennbare heidenchristliche Tradition müsse von dort stammen, und dasselbe gelte für die palästinisch-judenchristliche Tradition, die Paulus zwar auch in Jerusalem kennengelernt haben könnte, die aber "im wesentlichen" doch auch in Antiochia bekannt gewesen sei. Hellenistisch-judenchristliche Tradition sei Paulus sicher seit Damaskus vertraut, sie stehe "jedoch auch am Anfang der antiochenischen Gemeinde. Im ganzen kann man also sagen: Was Paulus später an alter Tradition benutzt, entstammt im wesentlichen dem antiochenischen Gemeindewissen."⁷⁸ Etwas später heißt es dann bei Becker: "In der antiochenischen Zeit des Apostels muß auch das Verhältnis des Paulus zur Jesustradition feste Strukturen angenommen haben."⁷⁹ Paulus spricht von Antiochia allerdings nur in *Gal. 2:11* usw.; dass er dort mit Jesustradition in Berührung kam, ist zweifellos möglich und sogar wahrscheinlich, aber es läßt sich quellenmäßig nicht belegen.

b. *Erwägungen hinsichtlich der Darstellung in der Apostelgeschichte*

Welche Vorstellungen von einer möglichen Beziehung zwischen Paulus und der Jesustradition vermittelt die Apostelgeschichte? Hier geht es weniger um die Frage, ob entsprechende Nachrichten historisch zuverlässig wären, sondern vor allem darum, welches Bild von Lukas in dieser Hinsicht entworfen wird.

⁷⁷ Becker, *Paulus*, pp. 107-108.

⁷⁸ Becker, *Paulus*, p. 109.

⁷⁹ Becker, *Paulus*, p. 119.

(1) Wie könnte Paulus an den in der Apostelgeschichte beschriebenen *Orten* seines Wirkens – sei es vor, sei es nach der Berufung – Jesustradition kennengelernt haben?

(1a) Der "junge Mann" Paulus (Saulus) wird in Apg. 7:60b als einer der an der Steinigung des Stephanus in Jerusalem zumindest mittelbar Beteiligten geschildert (vgl. 8:3). Dass er sich vor seiner Bekehrung/Berufung in Jerusalem aufgehalten hatte, sagt der lukanische Paulus dann später auch in seiner Jerusalemer Verteidigungsrede, in der er sich als Schüler des Gamaliel bezeichnet (22:3). Von einer unmittelbaren Beziehung zwischen Paulus und Jesus spricht Lukas nicht, obwohl es ja nicht schwierig gewesen wäre, Paulus als einen der Augenzeugen der Kreuzigung Jesu vorzustellen.

Die dramatisch entwickelte Szene von der Verfolgertätigkeit des Paulus, die ihn auch nach Damaskus führen soll (9:1-2), impliziert, dass Paulus in keiner Weise mit der Möglichkeit rechnet, die Auferstehungsbotschaft der von ihm Verfolgten könne womöglich der Wahrheit entsprechen. Als der erhöhte Jesus vor Damaskus dem Verfolger unmittelbar begegnet, löst das bei diesem infolgedessen einen auch physischen Schock aus, der durch die Handauflegung des Ananias gelöst wird.

(1b) Paulus beginnt in Damaskus sofort zu predigen. Aus 9:19b-22, vor allem aus der Formulierung in V. 20 (... ἐκήρυσσαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ), könnte man folgern, dass Lukas nicht nur sagen will, Paulus habe Jesus als den Sohn Gottes verkündigt, sondern er habe ausdrücklich vom *irdischen* Jesus gesprochen und von diesem gesagt, er sei der Sohn Gottes. Wo Paulus die entsprechenden Informationen erlangt haben könnte, erfährt man aber nicht. Insbesondere im Zusammenhang der Schilderung seiner Begegnung mit Ananias wird nicht einmal angedeutet, dass Paulus von Ananias irgendwelchen Unterricht erhielt oder dass ihm auch nur Informationen vermittelt wurden. Man erfährt hingegen sehr wohl, dass Ananias genau weiß, wer dieser Saulus/Paulus ist, und dass er den ihm ἐν ὁράματι begegnenden Jesus darüber sogar unterrichten zu müssen glaubt (9:13-14). Jesus teilt ihm als Antwort mit, welche Aufgabe dieser Saulus erhalten wird (9:15-16), woraufhin Ananias den Paulus durch Handauflegung heilt, ihm das πνεῦμα ἅγιον vermittelt, und Paulus sich taufen läßt (9:17-19a). Lukas sieht keine Notwendigkeit, Ananias als "Lehrer" des Paulus vorzustellen.

(1c) Die dann in 9:23-30 folgende Schilderung der Tätigkeit des Paulus nach seiner Berufung bzw. Bekehrung ist insbesondere in V. 26 usw. mit der eigenen Darstellung des Apostels in Gal. 1:15-24 nicht vereinbar.⁸⁰ Entscheidend für unseren Zusammenhang ist, dass Lukas nicht sagt, dass Paulus, der in Jerusalem nach Überwindung einiger Schwierigkeiten schließlich durch die Vermittlung des Barnabas zu den ἀπόστολοι gelangte, von diesen über Jesus informiert worden sei. Diese erhalten im Gegenteil durch Barnabas Kenntnis von der Bekehrung des Paulus und von dessen Verkündigungstätigkeit in Damaskus (9:27), und unmittelbar darauf erfährt man von der Predigtstätigkeit des Paulus in Jerusalem (9:28-29a) sowie von der Abreise nach Caesarea und nach Tarsus.⁸¹

(1d) In 11:25 wird Paulus durch Barnabas wieder in die Handlung eingeführt; er hält sich "ein ganzes Jahr" in der antiochenischen Gemeinde auf und lehrt "viel Volk." Anschließend überbringt er zusammen mit Barnabas eine Spende nach Jerusalem (11:27-30). Von der Vermittlung von Jesustradition an Paulus ist an keiner Stelle die Rede.

(2) In welcher Weise spricht der lukanische Paulus in seinen *Reden* vom Wirken und von der Verkündigung Jesu?

(2a) In der Rede in der Synagoge in Antiochia Pisidiae (13:15-41) erwähnt Paulus im Anschluß an den Überblick über die Geschichte Israels bis David (V. 17-22) Jesus als den gemäß der Verheißung aus dem "Samen Davids" hervorgegangenen σωτήρ (V. 23); es folgt eine vergleichsweise ausführliche Vorstellung Johannes des Täufers als des Vorläufers Jesu (V. 24-25). Nach einer rhetorischen Zwischenbemerkung (V. 26) schließt sich in V. 27-30 ein kurzer, erkennbar an das Lukasevangelium anknüpfender Bericht von Prozeß, Verurteilung, Hinrichtung und Beisetzung Jesu an, sowie (V. 31) ein an Apg. 1 anknüpfender Hinweis auf die Erscheinung des Auferstandenen. Bezüge auf Worte Jesu oder auf Ereignisse aus Jesu Wirken fehlen.

⁸⁰ Darauf braucht an dieser Stelle nicht näher eingegangen zu werden (s.o. zu Gal. 1:16b-20). Die Schilderung der Flucht aus Damaskus in Apg. 9:23-25 entspricht weitgehend 2 Kor. 11:32-33; hier scheint die Möglichkeit einer direkten literarischen Beziehung gegeben zu sein. Vgl. dazu G. Guttenberger, "Klugheit, Besonnenheit, Gerechtigkeit und Tapferkeit. Zum Hintergrund der Vorwürfe gegen Paulus nach 2Kor 10-13," *ZNW* 96 (2005), pp. 78-98, die freilich die Annahme einer literarischen Abhängigkeit verneint (p. 82 Anm. 22).

⁸¹ Dass Tarsus die Heimatstadt des Paulus ist, sagt Lukas erst in Apg. 21:39.

(2b) In der Darstellung des "Apostelkonzils" in 15:1-29, wo Paulus, anders als nach seiner eigenen Darstellung in Gal. 2:1-10, kaum eine Rolle spielt (vgl. 15:12), gibt es auffälligerweise auch in den Reden des Petrus und des Jakobus keinerlei Hinweise auf Worte oder Verhaltensweisen des irdischen Jesus. Keiner der Redner und auch nicht das "Aposteldekret" beruft sich auf eine Weisung Jesu, um der getroffenen Entscheidung eine besondere Autorität zu geben.⁸²

(2c) In dem knappen Referat der von Paulus in der Synagoge von Thessalonich gehaltenen Rede (17:3) wird inhaltlich an die Emmaus-Erzählung angeknüpft,⁸³ ohne dass aber das Geschehen als solches beschrieben würde.

(2d) In seiner Abschiedsrede in Milet (20:17-35) zitiert Paulus als letzte Aussage ausdrücklich "Worte Jesu"; aber das Logion in V. 35: μακάριόν ἐστιν ᾧ ἅλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν hat in der Evangelienüberlieferung und insbesondere auch im Lukasevangelium gar keine Entsprechung: "Das angebliche Herrenwort ist in Wirklichkeit ein griechisches Sprichwort."⁸⁴

(2e) Zwischen der Darstellung des Paulusprozesses in Apg. 21-28 und der Passionsgeschichte im Lukasevangelium bestehen deutliche Analogien;⁸⁵ aber nirgendwo in einer seiner Verteidigungsreden deutet der lukanische Paulus an, zwischen seinem Geschick und den Ereignissen beim Prozeß Jesu bestünden Parallelen.

(3) Fazit: Es ist auffällig, dass Lukas, immerhin Verfasser einer umfangreichen Jesuserzählung, keinen Anlaß dafür sieht, dass sich die "Apostel," die nach Apg. 1:21-22 immerhin ständige Begleiter des irdischen Jesus gewesen waren, in ihren Reden bzw. in ihren Entscheidungen auf Worte Jesu berufen.⁸⁶ Auch der lukanische Paulus sieht sich zu solcher 'Autoritätssicherung' offensichtlich nicht veranlaßt, und insoweit stimmt das von Lukas gezeichnete Bild mit den entsprechenden Beobachtungen zu den authentischen Paulustexten überein.

⁸² Im LkEv wurde die Überlieferung in Mk. 7:1-23 über "Rein und Unrein" übergangen; jetzt wird dieses Thema auf einer anderen Ebene gleichsam "nachgeholt."

⁸³ Vgl. Apg. 17:3b mit Lk. 24:26-27.

⁸⁴ Vgl. H. Conzelmann, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, Tübingen 1972, p. 129 (mit entsprechenden Belegen); ebenso J. Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, Göttingen 1998, p. 514.

⁸⁵ Vgl. dazu E. Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse im lukanischen Doppelwerk. Die Verfahren gegen Jesus und Paulus in exegetischer und rechtshistorischer Analyse*, Münster 2000.

⁸⁶ Die einzige Ausnahme ist die äußerst knappe Bemerkung in der Pfingstrede des Petrus Apg. 2:22.

*5. Zur historischen Frage
nach dem Ausgangspunkt der Jesustradition*

Wo ist der Ausgangspunkt der Jesustradition zu suchen? Zwei einander gegenüberstehende Positionen seien genannt. J. Schröter hat in einer Untersuchung zu den Anfängen der Jesusüberlieferung betont, der Terminus "Jesusüberlieferung" sei im Blick auf Paulus eigentlich "unangemessen," da Paulus im Zusammenhang seiner expliziten Verweise auf Jesusworte "mit auffälliger Konsequenz vom κύριος spreche."⁸⁷ In 1 Kor. 7:10-11 und 9:14 weise er "punktuell auf Anordnungen des κύριος hin," "ohne dabei Jesusworte in einer der synoptischen Überlieferung analogen Fassung zu zitieren." Diese Worte "gehören für ihn zur urchristlichen Überlieferung, die durch den κύριος autorisiert ist und die er in Gemeindeparänese bzw. Missionspraxis umsetzt." In diesen Zusammenhang gehörten auch die auf den κύριος zurückgeführte Abendmahlsparadosis sowie die eschatologische Belehrung in 1 Thess. 4:15-17.⁸⁸ Der bei Paulus erkennbare Befund zeige andererseits, "dass die Anfänge der Jesusüberlieferung in historischer Hinsicht nicht durch eine isolierte Konzentration auf die Wortüberlieferung zu erheben sind"; die "Einbindung der Wortüberlieferung in die biographisch-erinnernde Jesustradition zeichnet sich dadurch aus, dass sie die Bedeutung Jesu narrativ entfaltet und dadurch zwischen der Zeit Jesu und der eigenen Zeit vermittelt."⁸⁹

In Anknüpfung an H. Riesenfeld und B. Gerhardsson vertritt dagegen P. Stuhlmacher die These, die Anfänge der Jesusüberlieferung lägen "in dem Unterricht, den Jesus selbst seinen Jüngern bzw. Schülern (μαθηταί) erteilt" habe; diese Tradition sei, "nach frühjüdischem Muster (auswendig) 'gelernt'," in die Lehre der Apostel (Apg. 2:42) eingegangen.⁹⁰ Sollte dies tatsächlich zutreffen, so wäre zumindest festzustellen, dass Paulus von solcher Art Jesustradition offensichtlich nichts weiß bzw. dass er von ihr zumindest keinerlei Gebrauch macht. Die Art, wie Paulus auf Aussagen Jesu Bezug nimmt, zeigt im Gegenteil eher, dass es eine formale fixierung von tradierbarer Jesustradition (noch) nicht gegeben zu haben scheint. Dafür spricht zum

⁸⁷ Schröter, *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament*, p. 86.

⁸⁸ Schröter, *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament*, p. 90.

⁸⁹ Schröter, *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament*, pp. 103-104.

⁹⁰ P. Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* 1. *Grundlegung. Von Jesus zu Paulus*, Göttingen 1992, p. 44.

einen, dass die (wenigen) Jesusworte von Paulus vergleichsweise "ungenau" zitiert werden; und dafür spricht zum andern auch, dass ein bestimmtes inhaltliches "Profil" dieser Worte nicht deutlich wird—im Unterschied zu jener Überlieferung, die im allgemeinen als ‚Bekenntnistradition‘ bezeichnet wird. Auffällig ist, dass dies nicht nur für die authentischen paulinischen Briefe gilt, sondern auch für das in der lukanischen Apostelgeschichte gezeichnete Bild des Paulus.

6. Zur historischen und theologischen Relevanz der Fragestellung

Im Blick auf die historische und theologische Relevanz der hier erörterten Fragestellung hat N. Walter hervorgehoben, die Annahme einer sachlichen Übereinstimmung der Verkündigung des Paulus mit der Botschaft Jesu müsse nicht zwingend bedeuten, dass "man einen möglichst ungebrochenen, direkten und kompletten Traditionszusammenhang zwischen Jesus und Paulus voraussetzt und hofft nachweisen zu können"; umgekehrt gelte, dass Weitergabe von Tradition noch nicht bedeutet, dass "die Garantie für eine wirkliche Kontinuität auch in der Sache" gegeben ist.⁹¹

In einer judenchristlichen Schrift des 2. Jahrhunderts wird Paulus gegenüber der Vorwurf erhoben, er habe Jesus nicht gekannt, sondern sein Wissen lediglich aus einer kurzen Visionserfahrung gewonnen; nur deshalb habe es überhaupt zu dem Konflikt mit Petrus in Antiochia kommen können. Die *Kerygmata Petrou*, eine nach der Analyse G. Streckers vermutlich sehr frühe Quellenschrift der romanhaften Pseudoklementinen,⁹² berichten von "Simon (Magus)" als einem Gegner des Petrus; es wird aber sehr schnell deutlich, dass mit diesem "Simon" tatsächlich Paulus gemeint ist.⁹³

⁹¹ Walter, "Paulus," pp. 517-518.

⁹² S. dazu in der Einleitung zu den Pseudoklementinen den Abschnitt zu den *Kerygmata Petrou* von G. Strecker in: W. Schneemelcher (ed.), *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 2. Apostolisches, Apokalypsen und Verwandtes*, Tübingen ²1989, pp. 443-446.

⁹³ Den Text der *Kerygmata Petrou* aus Ps-Clemens, *Homilien* bietet in Rekonstruktion und Übersetzung G. Strecker in: Schneemelcher (ed.), *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, pp. 484-486. Vgl. G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen*, Berlin ²1981, pp. 187-196. Vgl. auch A. Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum. Das Bild des Apostels und die Rezeption der paulinischen Theologie in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Marcion*, Tübingen 1979, pp. 104-108 sowie pp. 367-371.

Petrus entwickelt in einer Rede zunächst die Theorie, Gott habe in der Schöpfung alles paarweise zusammengestellt, wobei aber beim Menschen der Zweite eines Paares stets der bessere oder überlegene sei.⁹⁴ Petrus fährt dann fort: "Wer dieser Anordnung folgt, hätte erkennen können, von wem Simon (= Paulus), der vor mir als erster zu den Heiden kam, ausgeschickt wurde, und zu wem ich (= Petrus) gehöre, der ich später als jener aufgetreten bin und hinzukam wie zur Finsternis das Licht, wie zur Unwissenheit die Gnosis, wie zur Krankheit die Heilung" (H II 17:3). "Simon" unterbricht diese Rede: "Du hattest behauptet, die Lehre deines Meisters genau kennengelernt zu haben, weil du ihn unmittelbar (ἐνσπρεῖα) gehört und gesehen habest, dagegen sei es einem anderen nicht möglich, mittels eines Traumes oder einer Vision das gleiche zu erfahren." Das aber, so fügt "Simon" (= Paulus) nun hinzu, sei völlig falsch: "Wem etwas unmittelbar zu Gehör kommt, der hat keineswegs Sicherheit betreffs des Gesagten. Denn er muß prüfen, ob er nicht getäuscht wird, weil das, was ihm begegnet, nur ein Mensch ist. Die Vision erzeugt dagegen zugleich mit der Erscheinung die Gewißheit, daß man etwas Göttliches sieht" (H XVII 13:1-2).

Petrus hält dem entgegen, es sei bekannt, "daß viele Götzenanbeter, Ehebrecher und andere Sünder Gesichte und wahre Träume geschaut haben, daß einige aber auch Visionen hatten, die von Dämonen gewirkt waren." Petrus betont, der Mensch könne Gott nicht schauen, da Gottes Wesen "von einem unerträglichen Licht umstrahlt wird"; deshalb sei es ein Zeichen göttlichen Erbarmens, dass er für die Menschen unsichtbar ist. "Wer aber eine Vision hat, der möge erkennen, daß dies das Werk eines bösen Dämons ist" (H XVII 16:2, 3, 6). Petrus fügt hinzu, das Wahre werde nicht durch einen Traum erworben, "sondern den Guten durch Einsicht verliehen." So sei auch ihm "der Sohn vom Vater offenbart" worden, und dementsprechend kenne auch er "die Kraft der Offenbarung," die in seinem Herzen aufgestiegen sei, als er Jesus den "Sohn des lebendigen Gottes" nannte (H XVII 18:1).⁹⁵ Es sei Ausdruck des Zorns, durch Gesichte und Träume zu handeln, freundschaftliche Begegnung hingegen finde sich dort, wo "von Mund zu Mund" geredet wird (H XVII 18:6).

Petrus fügt dann hinzu: Selbst wenn Jesus dem "Simon" in einer Vision erschienen sein sollte, "so hätte er doch nur durch Gesichte und Träume oder auch durch äußerliche Offenbarungen geredet"; das führe aber zu der Frage, ob denn wirklich jemand "auf Grund einer Vision zur

⁹⁴ H II 16:1-17:2. Die Beispiele sind: Kain und Abel, der schwarze Rabe und die weiße Taube (Gen. 8:6-12), Ismael und Isaak, Esau und Jakob, Aaron und Mose sowie (ohne Namensnennung) Johannes und Jesus.

⁹⁵ Die Anspielung auf Mt. 16:16-18 ist deutlich.

Lehre tüchtig gemacht werden" könne. Und wenn "Simon" vielleicht meine, dies sei tatsächlich möglich, dann müsse die Frage gestellt werden: "Weswegen hat dann der Lehrer bei uns, die wir wachend waren, ein ganzes Jahr zugebracht?" (H XVII 19:1-2) Petrus führt zusätzlich aber auch ein inhaltliches Argument ins Feld: Sollte "Simon" tatsächlich eine Erscheinung gehabt haben, dann müsse er die Frage beantworten, warum er das Gegenteil von dem sage, was er gelernt hat. "Wenn du aber von ihm eine Stunde lang besucht, unterwiesen und dadurch zum Apostel geworden bist, dann verkündige seine Worte, lege aus, was er gelehrt hat, sei seinen Aposteln Freund und bekämpfe nicht mich, der ich sein Vertrauter bin" (H XVII 19:3-4). Denn, so sagt Petrus in direkter Aufnahme von Mt. 16:18 und Gal. 2:11-14, "mir, der ich ein standhafter Fels, der Kirche Grundstein bin, hast du feindselig widerstanden" (H XVII 19:4). "Willst du aber wirklich mit der Wahrheit zusammenarbeiten, dann lerne zuerst von uns, was wir von jenem [sc. Jesus] gelernt haben, und werde als ein Schüler der Wahrheit unser Mitarbeiter" (H XVII 19:7).

Die *Kerygmata Petrou* binden die "Rechtläubigkeit" des "Simon" (= Paulus) also an die Kenntnis der Jesustradition. Die modernen Bemühungen, in größerem Umfang Jesustradition bei Paulus zu entdecken, könnten in der Gefahr stehen, diese Position zu bestätigen, insofern man sich zu der apologetischen, aber textlich nicht verifizierbaren Feststellung veranlaßt sieht, dass Paulus in Wahrheit eben doch bei Petrus "gelernt" habe. Aber die paulinische Theologie ist nicht mit einem Mangel behaftet, wenn dem Apostel tatsächlich nur das an Kenntnis von Jesustradition zugewiesen wird, was sich bei ihm wirklich erkennen läßt; und sie gewinnt nicht an Qualität, wenn man unter hohem Aufwand an Scharfsinn und Phantasie versucht, unabhängig vom tatsächlichen Textbefund mehr an Jesustradition zu entdecken, als tatsächlich erkennbar ist.

Gewiß kann man nicht sagen, Paulus habe am irdischen Jesus "kein Interesse" gehabt: Dass Jesus ein Mensch war, ein Jude, und dass er am Kreuz starb, ist für Paulus die Grundvoraussetzung dafür, dass er vom Auferstandenen bzw. Erhöhten sprechen und dem Sterben Jesu Heilsbedeutung zuweisen kann.⁹⁶ Aber Paulus deutet nirgends an, dass es ihm darum gegangen wäre, eine Kontinuität zwi-

⁹⁶ K. Scholtissek, "'Geboren aus einer Frau, geboren unter das Gesetz' (Gal 4,4)," p. 218: "Paulus ist nicht an einem isoliert verstandenen irdischen Jesus von Nazaret interessiert, wohl aber an dem Menschsein Jesu in einem heilsgeschichtlichen bzw. soteriologischen Sinn."

schen dem Inhalt der Botschaft Jesu und des von ihm verkündigten Evangeliums aufzuweisen; es gibt auch keine Anzeichen dafür, dass in einem der Konflikte, denen Paulus insbesondere in Galatien und in Korinth konfrontiert war, die Frage der direkten Beziehung zu Jesus bzw. zur Jesustradition eine Rolle gespielt hätte. Das ist gerade im Fall des Galaterbriefes besonders bemerkenswert, da hier ja vermutet werden kann, dass sich die in Galatien tätigen pauluskritischen Missionare nicht nur auf die Tora, sondern auch auf Jesustradition beriefen.

Die Frage, woher Paulus die in ihrem Umfang vergleichsweise geringfügige Tradition vom Handeln und Reden Jesu kannte, wird sich nicht abschließend beantworten lassen. Als Verfolger hat er natürlich gewußt, dass der "Heiland" derer, die er verfolgte, ein gekreuzigter Mensch war; vielleicht verbirgt sich hinter der Aussage in Gal. 3:13 eine antichristliche Polemik, derzufolge der Kreuzestod erkennen ließ, dass Jesus den Fluchtod gestorben war und er infolgedessen nicht der Messias gewesen sein konnte.⁹⁷ Wahrscheinlich hat Paulus in Damaskus und auch in Jerusalem, ganz sicher auch in Antiochia Jesusworte gehört und Traditionen erhalten, die sich auf das Menschsein Jesu bezogen. Aber dass sich Paulus in besonderer Weise um die Kenntnis solcher Tradition bemüht hätte, können wir nicht erkennen.

⁹⁷ S. dazu D. Säger, "'Verflucht ist jeder, der am Holze hängt' (Gal 3,13b). Zur Rezeption einer frühen antichristlichen Polemik," in: *id.*, *Von der Bestimmtheit des Anfangs. Studien zu Jesus, Paulus und zum frühchristlichen Schriftverständnis*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2007, pp. 99-106.

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MATTHÄUS IN DER KRITIK.
BEOBACHTUNGEN AM THOMAS- UND AM
MARIAEVANGELIUM

Dieter Lührmann

Seinen Namen hat das Matthäusevangelium von einem derjenigen, die in allen vier neutestamentlichen Listen der zwölf Apostel genannt sind,¹ jedoch ohne dass er dort irgendwo als Verfasser eines Evangeliums bezeichnet wird. Eine solche Zuweisung findet sich auch sonst weder direkt noch indirekt im Text selber, sondern nur in dem Titel des Werkes εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, sei es am Schluss des Buches und/oder an seinem Anfang.² Hinter dem Namen verbirgt sich der hebräische *Mathai*, um die griechische Personendung -ος erweitert.³ Nur in Mt. 10:3 ist Matthäus dabei durch einen Zusatz als "der Zöllner" näher gekennzeichnet, ein Rückverweis auf die kurz zuvor erzählte Geschichte von der Berufung eines Matthäus, der an der Zollstation bei Nazareth saß, als Jesus vorüberging.⁴

Die nächsten Parallelen dazu finden sich in Mk. 2:13-17, nach der Zwei-Quellen-Theorie die Vorlage für Mt. 9:9-13, und in Lk. 5:27-32. An beiden Stellen aber heißt der Zöllner nicht Matthäus, sondern Levi,⁵ bei Markus zusätzlich "Sohn des Alphäus."⁶ Von dem ist sonst in beiden Evangelien freilich nicht mehr die Rede, vor allem zählt er

¹ Mt. 10:3; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:15; Apg. 1:14; er begegnet nicht im Johannesevangelium.

² Gegenüber der Schreibweise mit einem doppelten *Theta* haben einige westeuropäische Sprachen vom lateinischen *Matthaeus* her *th*: Mattheüs (holländisch), Matthew (englisch), Matthieu (französisch), Italienisch jedoch Matteo, Spanisch Mateo. Die "ökumenische" Schreibweise *Mattäus* hat sich im Deutschen nicht durchgesetzt; sie findet sich nicht einmal in der "Einheitsübersetzung" der deutschsprachigen römisch-katholischen Diözesen.

³ Kurzform des Namens Matthatia(s), den der Stammvater der Makkabäer trug (1 Makk. 2:1 u.ö.).

⁴ Mt. 9:9-13.

⁵ So die Wiedergabe des Namens in den modernen westeuropäischen Sprachen—bei unterschiedlicher Aussprache—nach der Vulgata. Die besseren griechischen Handschriften bieten in Lk. 5:29 die gräzisierte Form Λευί und in Mk. 2:14/Lk. 5:27 den entsprechenden Akkusativ Λευί.

⁶ Vgl. Lk. 5:27 D.

weder dort noch anderswo zu den zwölf Aposteln.⁷ Im Matthäusevangelium hingegen soll offenbar mit Matthäus nach der Berufung der beiden Brüderpaare Petrus und Andreas sowie Jakobus und Johannes (Mt. 4:18-22) die eines weiteren aus diesem Kreis erzählt werden. Der Vatersname Alphäus gehört in Mt. 10:3/Mk. 3:18/Lk. 6:15/Agg. 1:13 zu einem Jakobus,⁸ der so von Jakobus, dem Zebedaiden, unterschieden wird.

Dass dieser Matthäus der Verfasser des deshalb nach ihm benannten Evangeliums sei, findet sich—abgesehen von dem Titel, der seinen Ursprung in der Unterscheidung mehrerer Evangelien haben dürfte—erstmalig in der ersten Hälfte des zweiten Jahrhunderts bei Papias von Hierapolis, aus dessen umfangreichem Werk nur einige Fragmente erhalten sind,⁹ darunter die knappe, bis in die neuzeitliche Evangelienforschung hinein wirkende Bemerkung: Μαθθαῖος μὲν οὖν ἐβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο (v.l. συνεγράψατο), ἡρμήνευσε δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δύνάτος ἕκαστος (Euseb, *Hist. eccl.* III 39.16). Erst Friedrich Schleiermacher hat 1832 herausgearbeitet,¹⁰ dass hier nicht vom Evangelium als ganzem die Rede sei, sondern nur von den λόγοις, während z.B. die für den Westen bestimmende lateinische Euseb-Übersetzung Rufins ganz selbstverständlich *evangelium* für λόγια einsetzte,¹¹ und auch Hieronymus vermittelte dem Abendland, dass Matthäus als erster sein Evangelium in hebräischer Sprache geschrieben habe.¹²

Das war offenbar die herrschende Ansicht in der Alten Kirche des Westens wie des Ostens,¹³ und dem entspricht die Dominanz des Matthäusevangeliums zusammen mit dem Johannesevangelium in

⁷ In weiten Bereichen der handschriftlichen Überlieferung von Mt. 10:3 und Mk. 3:18 findet sich neben Matthäus ein Λεββαῖος/Lebbaeus statt Thaddäus, vielleicht trotz des anderen Konsonanten ein Anklang an Levi?

⁸ Vgl. auch Mk. 2:14 v.l.

⁹ Vgl. dazu U.H.J. Körtner, *Papias von Hierapolis*, Göttingen 1983.

¹⁰ F.D.E. Schleiermacher, "Über die Zeugnisse des Papias von unsern beiden ersten Evangelien," in: H. Patsch/D. Schmid (ed.), *F.D.E. Schleiermacher. Kritische Gesamtausgabe 1.8. Exegetische Schriften*, Berlin 2001, pp. 227-254.

¹¹ *Matthaeus quidem scripsit hebraeo sermone, interpretatus est autem ea quae scripsit unusquisque, sicut potuit.*

¹² *Matthaeus qui et Levi, ex publicano apostolus, primus in Iudaea, propter eos qui ex circumcisione crediderunt, evangelium Christi hebraeis litteris verbisque composuit, quod quis postea in Graecum transtulerit, non satis certum est (vir. ill. 3; vgl. praef. Mt).*

¹³ Das entsprechende Material findet sich zusammengestellt im Appendix II der *Synopsis quattuor evangeliorum*, hg. in vielen Auflagen von K. Aland.

der frühen handschriftlichen Überlieferung wie in der Perikopenverteilung der Lektionare. Erst die Behauptung der Markus-Priorität hat ihm im 19. Jahrhundert diesen Vorrang genommen, die Zwei-Quellen-Theorie es aber in Gestalt der Logienquelle mindestens teilweise rehabilitiert, insofern die großen Reden wie die Bergpredigt ebenso auf eine Primärquelle wie das Markusevangelium zurückgeführt werden. Auch in modernen Jesus-Darstellungen ist jedoch kaum zu übersehen, dass in irgendeiner Weise der matthäische Jesus noch weiterhin dominiert. Im folgenden soll es jedoch nicht darum gehen, sondern um Beobachtungen, die mich auf Spuren einer frühen, bisher m.W. nicht erkannten Kritik an Matthäus und seinem Evangelium geführt haben. Henk Jan de Jonge als Herausgeber von *Novum Testamentum* danke ich dabei für die kritische Durchsicht meiner Aufsätze, auf die ich hier zurückgreifen kann.¹⁴

1. Thomasevangelium

Das Thomasevangelium bietet in Logion 13 eine Szene, die an die synoptische Perikope vom Petrusbekenntnis erinnert. Doch bleibt das, was Petrus sagt—“du gleichst einem gerechten Engel”¹⁵—weit zurück hinter dem, was er nach den Synoptikern erfasst hat: “du bist der Gesalbte” (Mk. 8:29) bzw. “der Gesalbte, der Sohn des lebendigen Gottes” (Mt. 16:16). Im Gegenteil, Thomas ist es, der die richtige Antwort weiß: “Meister, mein Mund wird es gar nicht ertragen, zu sagen, wem du gleichst,” wenn auch Jesus sogar die Anrede “Meister” noch zurückweist. Dazwischen aber steht die Antwort des Matthäus, die offenbar ebenso wenig wie die des Petrus ausreicht: “Du gleichst einem Philosophen, einem Klugen,” wobei das griechische Fremdwort φιλόσοφος durch koptisch ⲡⲙⲛⲁⲛⲧ erläutert ist, das heißt, “klug,” “verständlich,” “einsichtig” oder wie anders zu übersetzen, möglicherweise mit ironischem Unterton, womit positive Konnotationen von “Philosoph” ironisch etwas

¹⁴ Vgl. zum folgenden mein Buch: *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien. Studien zu neuen Texten und zu neuen Fragen*, Leiden 2004, in den diese früheren Aufsätze eingegangen sind; vgl. auch meine Textausgabe: *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien in griechischer und lateinischer Sprache herausgegeben, übersetzt und eingeleitet in Zusammenarbeit mit Egbert Schlarb*, Marburg 2000.

¹⁵ Im koptischen Text finden sich die griechischen Fremdwörter ἄγγελος und δίκαιος, die auch für eine griechische Vorlage angenommen werden können.

zurückgestuft werden. Jedenfalls kommt auch Matthäus der Wahrheit nicht näher als Petrus.

Warum aber wird Matthäus überhaupt genannt gegenüber der Schar der namenlosen Jünger in den synoptischen Parallelen? Sein Bekenntnis will ja gar nicht passen zu dem Bild von Jesus, das sich uns aus dem Evangelium unter seinem Namen ergibt. Dort geht es nirgends um Jesus als Philosophen; er ist von Anfang an nicht nur Sohn Davids und Abrahams (1:1), sondern auf dem Höhepunkt des Prozesses nicht weniger als "der Gesalbte, der Sohn Gottes" (26:63). Zu diesem religiösen Sprachfeld jüdischer Tradition passt die Aussage des Matthäus im Thomasevangelium in keiner Weise, zumal sie durch die Erläuterung noch einmal nichtreligiös festgelegt wird. Entweder handelt es sich in Logion 13 bei "Matthäus" um eine mehr oder weniger zufällige Nennung einer beliebigen Figur aus dem Jüngerkreis—dann wäre allenfalls die aufgezeigte Diskrepanz zum Matthäusevangelium festzustellen; oder es geht um eine gezielte Polemik gegen den Evangelisten und seine Darstellung des Wirkens Jesu.

Für letzteres spricht bereits das auf diese Szene folgende Logion 14, in dem Jesus zunächst in scharfer Form Stellung nimmt gegen Fasten, Beten und Almosen und dann alle Speisegebote verwirft. Ersterem entspricht im Neuen Testament allein der Zusammenhang in der matthäischen Bergpredigt, in dem Jesus—in umgekehrter Reihenfolge—Anweisungen gibt zu einem *richtigen* Almosen geben, Beten und Fasten (Mt. 6:1-18), das alles aber keinesfalls verwirft wie hier im Thomasevangelium. Der zweite Teil hat eine Parallele in Mt. 15:1-20. Im Unterschied zur Vorlage Mk. 7:1-23 fehlt dort das Thema der Speisegebote; Matthäus übernimmt aus seiner Vorlage nur Jesu Aussage über Reinheit und Unreinheit im allgemeinen, nicht die grundsätzliche Folgerung "womit er alle Speisen für rein erklärte" (Mk. 7:19c). Wie wichtig dieser ganze Zusammenhang für das Thomasevangelium ist, zeigt sich daran, dass ein ähnliches Logion bereits am Anfang des Evangeliums steht, wo Jesus eine entsprechende Frage seiner Jünger nach Fasten, Beten und Almosen geben—hier in der matthäischen Reihenfolge—und nach Speisegeboten mit einer ebenso klaren Absage beantwortet (Logion 6).¹⁶ Es geht hier also nicht um eine Auseinandersetzung mit jüdischen Vor-

¹⁶ Fasten und Beten allein werden auch in 27 und 104 thematisiert; vgl. auch *Didache* 8-9, abhängig von Matthäus 6.

schriften im allgemeinen, sondern um eine innerchristliche über verbindliche Regelungen, christliches Leben zu gestalten, wie sie sich in dieser Weise im Munde Jesu nur im Matthäusevangelium finden.

Für eine solche innerchristliche Kontroverse gibt es weitere Anzeichen. Das Thomasevangelium beginnt nach dem Prolog (Logion 1) mit einem allgemein formulierten Aufruf zum Suchen, das über Finden und Verwirrung zum Herrschen (βασιλεύειν im griechischen Text) führt und schließlich—so die hier erhaltene griechische Fassung—zur Ruhe.¹⁷ Logion 3 setzt dann ein mit einer Warnung vor Verführern, denen ein falsches Verständnis der βασιλεία unterstellt wird. Wenn Jesus sie mit der Aussage zitiert, dass das Reich im Himmel sei, dann findet sich eine solche Verbindung als βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν bekanntlich nur bei Matthäus, der es auch gegen seine Quellen einsetzt.¹⁸ Im Thomasevangelium führt Jesus eine solche Redeweise *ad absurdum* mit dem Hinweis auf die Vögel, die dann eher das Reich besitzen könnten, und durch das parallel gebildete Pendant, dass die Fische denselben Vorteil hätten bei einem Reich, das unter der Erde wäre.¹⁹ Die "richtige" Aussage hingegen entspricht im wesentlichen Lk. 17:21, dass das Reich ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ist, mit der Erweiterung "und außerhalb von euch."

Am Anfang des Thomasevangeliums steht also, vergleichbar dem Markusevangelium (Mk. 1:15) und auch dem Matthäusevangelium (Mt. 4:17), eine Aussage über das Reich, die am Ende im vorletzten Logion 113 wieder aufgenommen wird:²⁰ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ χαμαὶ ἥπλωται καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὐκ ἐμβλέπουσιν αὐτήν. Nicht nur hier ist die Verbindung βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ zu belegen, sondern auch in *P.Oxy.* 1 v Z. 6-8, οὐ μὴ εὕρητε τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ,²¹ der griechischen Fassung von Logion 27. In Logion 3 schließlich ist die Lücke im griechischen Text von *P.Oxy.* 654, 15 sinnvoll allein zu

¹⁷ *P.Oxy.* 654, 5-9.

¹⁸ Vgl. auch andere Verbindungen wie "Vater im Himmel," die typisch sind für das Matthäusevangelium.

¹⁹ So die griechische Fassung *P.Oxy.* 654, 13, die koptische ("im Meer") ist an sich stimmiger.

²⁰ "Das Reich Gottes ist ausgebreitet auf Erden, und die Menschen sehen es nicht"; Zitat aus H. Berthold (ed.), *Makarios/Simeon. Reden und Briefe 2. Die Logoi B 30-64*, Berlin 1973, p. 43.

²¹ Nicht wie im koptischen Text einfach "werdet ihr das Reich nicht finden."

ergänzen als: καὶ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν [ἐσ]τι.²² So ergibt sich "Reich Gottes" als in Logion 3 und 113 das Thomas-evangelium insgesamt umschließendes Thema.

Das kann freilich streng genommen nur für den griechischen Text gelten, denn in der koptischen Fassung fehlt die Verbindung "Reich Gottes" ganz. Dort findet sich neben dem absoluten Sprachgebrauch²³ die Rede vom "Reich des Vaters"²⁴ und überraschenderweise trotz der Kritik von Logion 3 dreimal auch "Reich der Himmel."²⁵ Diese Differenz zwischen griechischem und koptischem Text ist nicht einfach als Problem im Prinzip gleichwertiger Überlieferungen des Textes anzusehen; die drei griechischen Handschriften weisen vielmehr zurück auf die Entstehungszeit des Thomasevangeliums im zweiten, die eine koptische hingegen auf seine Übersetzung im vierten Jahrhundert. Wie sich z.B. bei Rufins Wiedergabe des Papias-Zitats zeigte, ist für die Antike das Ideal einer "wortgetreuen" Übersetzung nicht selbstverständlich vorauszusetzen, so dass auf dem Weg einer "Rückübersetzung" des koptischen Textes eine griechische Vorlage zu ermitteln wäre. Übersetzungen spiegeln immer auch ihre eigene Situation neben der ursprünglichen, aus der der übersetzte Text stammt. Für das Thomasevangelium bedeutet das, dass der in der griechischen Fassung von Logion 3 karikierte mathäische Sprachgebrauch "Reich der Himmel" zur Zeit der Übersetzung ins Koptische allgemein üblich geworden war und deshalb in einer veränderten Lage (inkonsequenterweise) aufgenommen werden konnte. Darüber hinaus verliert das Thema "Reich (Gottes)" im koptischen Text von Logion 3 etwas an Bedeutung, denn im Unterschied zum griechischen ist die Selbsterkenntnis nicht mehr die Folge aus dem Finden des "Reiches Gottes"; die zweite Hälfte des Logions steht nun fast unverbunden neben der ersten.

Das Thomasevangelium beginnt also mit zwei längeren Darlegungen Jesu, die gegen Sachverhalte polemisieren, die sich nur im Matthäusevangelium finden, in Logion 3 gegen "Verführer" gerichtet, in Logion 6 als Antwort auf eine Frage der Jünger. Eine

²² P. Oxy. 654 enthält keine Abkürzungen nach Art der *nomina sacra*; der koptische Text hat auch hier nur "das Reich."

²³ Logion 3, 22, 27, 46, 49, 82, 107, 109, 113: so auch die griechische und die lateinische Fassung von Logion 82.

²⁴ Vor allem in Gleichnissen (Logion 57, 76, 96-98) sowie in 99 und 113.

²⁵ Logion 20, 54, 114.

aggressive Tendenz ist zwar auch in der koptischen Fassung noch erkennbar, jedoch stark abgeschwächt. Für diejenigen, die hinter der Übersetzung standen, hatte die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Matthäusevangelium offenbar nicht mehr die gleiche aktuelle Bedeutung. Es war inzwischen akzeptiert.

Die ursprüngliche Auseinandersetzung lässt sich jedoch möglicherweise auch an Logion 30 aufzeigen. Harold W. Attridge hat die wenigen Buchstabenreste von *P.Oxy.* 1, 2-6 unter weitgehender Berücksichtigung der koptischen Fassung so rekonstruiert, dass Z. 3-6 einen Gegensatz zu Z. 2-3 bilden:²⁶

[λέγ]ει [Ι(ησοῦ)ς· ὅπ]ου ἐὰν ᾧσιν	Jesus sagt: "Wo drei
[τρ]ε[ίς], ε[ἰσ]ὶν ἄθεοι· καὶ	sind, sind sie ohne Gott. Und
[ό]που ε[ἰς] ἐστὶν μόνος	wo einer allein ist,
[λ]έγω· ἐγώ εἰμι μετ' αὐ-	sage ich: 'Ich bin bei
τ[οῦ].	ihm'."

Verglichen mit Mt. 18:20 als Gegentext ergibt sich in Z. 2-5 die Vereinzelung, nicht die Gemeinschaft als der Ort christlicher Lebensgestaltung: "Wo nämlich zwei oder drei versammelt sind in meinem Namen, da bin ich in ihrer Mitte (ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν)." In der koptischen Übersetzung von Logion 30 ist eine solch radikale Absage nicht weiter festgehalten. Gestrichen ist das *Alpha privativum* in ἄθεοι²⁷ zugunsten von θεοί, und im Anschluss an Mt. 18:20 ist die Zahl erweitert zu "drei, zwei oder eins." Auch an diesem Punkt, dass zur christlichen Existenz die Gemeinschaft gehört, hatte sich Matthäus inzwischen durchgesetzt.

2. Mariaevangelium

Beim Mariaevangelium²⁸ richtet sich das Hauptinteresse verständlicherweise auf die Namensgeberin und Hauptakteurin dieses einzi-

²⁶ "The Original Text of Gos. Thom., Saying 30," *BASPap* 16 (1979), pp. 153-157; ebenso: *id.*, "Gospel of Thomas Appendix: The Greek Fragments," in: B. Layton (ed.), *Nag Hammadi Codex II* 2-7, Leiden 1989, pp. 95-128 (aufgenommen in Alands Synopse ab 1996). Dass der koptische Text in sich keinen Sinn ergibt, ist allgemein zugestanden.

²⁷ Nicht als *nomen sacrum* verkürzt geschrieben wie θ(εο)ῦ in *P.Oxy.* 1 v Z. 8.

²⁸ Vgl. dazu jetzt die schöne kommentierte Ausgabe von Christopher Tuckett, *The Gospel of Mary*, Oxford 2007, auf die ich nicht mehr eingehen kann, vor allem nicht auf seine freundliche Kritik meiner hier noch einmal wiederholten Interpretation.

gen weiblichen Evangeliums, Maria²⁹ (Magdalena). Dabei wird jedoch leicht übersehen, dass es auch hier Spuren einer Kritik am Matthäusevangelium gibt, vergleichbar der im Thomasevangelium beobachteten. Ebenso wie dort spielt die Differenz zwischen den—in diesem Fall zwei—griechischen Handschriften (*P.Oxy.* 3525 und *P.Ryl.* 463) und der koptischen Überlieferung (*BG* 8502) eine Rolle. Am Schluss des Evangeliums nämlich ist es im griechischen Text allein Levi, der beginnt (ἤρχεν), das Evangelium zu verkündigen, nicht die Jünger insgesamt wie im koptischen (ΔΥΡΔΡΧΕΙ). Dieser Levi³⁰ hatte sich zuvor auf Marias Seite gestellt in ihrer Auseinandersetzung mit Petrus und Andreas um die Legitimität der von ihr wiedergegebenen Offenbarung.³¹

Den Inhalt des zu verkündigenden Evangeliums hatte Levi dabei so bestimmt: κηρύξω[εν τὸ] εὐαγγέλιον, μηδὲν ὁ[ρ]ίζοντ[ες] μ[η]δὲ νομο εἶπ[εν] ὁ] σωτήρ.³² Damit weist er zurück auf den Schluss der Rede des Auferstandenen, von dem in griechischer Fassung in *P.Oxy.* 3525 Z. 3 nur wenige Buchstabenreste erhalten sind, die sich vielleicht als οὐδε νομ lesen lassen. Das entspräche den Negationen, die sich im koptischen Text finden, am Schluss des Evangeliums wie auch zuvor schon in der Rede Jesu: "Geht also und predigt das Evangelium vom Reich! Legt keine Regel fest über das hinaus (παρά), was ich euch angeordnet habe, und erlasst kein Gesetz wie der Gesetzgeber, damit Ihr nicht dadurch ergriffen werdet" (p. 8, 21-9, 4),³³ mit εὐαγγέλιον, ὅρος, νόμος, νομοθετής als griechischen Fremdwörtern bzw. in der Wiederholung durch Levi am Schluss des Evangeliums (p. 18, 20) ὅρος und νόμος.

Eine so betonte Absage an zusätzliche Gebote erklärt sich vor dem Hintergrund einer Christologie, die sich im 2. Jahrhundert heraus-

²⁹ In den griechischen Handschriften Μαριάμμη, in der koptischen ΜΑΡΙΔΑΜ, im Titel mit verdoppeltem M. Das entspricht der Wiedergabe des hebräischen Namen *Mirjam*, eventuell mit der griechischen femininen Personalendung -η im Unterschied zur lateinischen Namensform *Maria* (weibliche Form zu *Marius*), die im Deutschen übernommen ist (englisch *Mary*, französisch *Marie*).

³⁰ Λευεί, koptisch ΛΕΥΕΙ, *ei* in beiden Fällen itazistisch als *i* zu lesen.

³¹ Dieselbe Figurenkonstellation findet sich am Ende des *Petrusevangeliums* (XIV 60), wo Levi über seinen Vatersnamen Alphäus ausdrücklich identifiziert wird als derjenige von Mk. 2:14.

³² *P.Ryl.* 463 v 11-14: "Lasst uns verkündigen das Evangelium, ohne etwas zu bestimmen und ohne Gesetze zu erlassen, wie der Erlöser gesagt hat."

³³ Übersetzung von J. Hartenstein, in: H.-M. Schenke/H.-G. Bethge/U.U. Kaiser (eds), *Nag Hammadi Deutsch*, Berlin 2003, p. 841.

gebildet und schnell verbreitet hat: Jesus als Geber eines neuen Gesetzes (*nova lex*).³⁴ Unter Berufung auf Jes. 2:3 bzw. Mi. 4:2³⁵ wird er als *Logos* und zugleich auch *Nomos* verstanden, inhaltlich ein von alttestamentlichen Ritualvorschriften gereinigtes Gesetz, Christus selber als neuer Mose, der ja als ὁ νομοθέτης schlechthin galt. Für eine solche Interpretation bot sich—and bietet sich bis in die Gegenwart—in besonderer Weise das Matthäusevangelium an, schon wegen der Szenerie der Bergpredigt verglichen mit dem Sinai. Es endet ja auch mit der Verpflichtung, alles das zu halten, was der irdische Jesus *geboten* hat (Mt. 28:20: τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν). Kritische Töne wie im Mariaevangelium sind demgegenüber ausgesprochen selten.

Das Augenmerk ist noch auf eine scheinbar nur geringe Differenz zwischen dem griechischen Text und dem koptischen zu richten. In ersterem verweist Levi, wie bereits zitiert, mit ὡς εἶπ[εν ὁ] σωτὴρ zurück auf Jesu vorausgehende Rede. Im koptischen Text dagegen heißt es an dieser Stelle jedoch „über das hinaus (παρὰ), was der Erlöser gesagt hat“ (p. 18,21). Levi wiederholt damit den—oben bereits nach dem koptischen Text zitierten—Schluss von Jesu Anweisung, die dort dasselbe παρὰ enthält. Durch die Wiedergabe oder vielmehr Ersetzung von ὡς durch παρὰ hat sich der Sinn aber erheblich verschoben, denn nun wird das Verständnis Jesu als Geber eines neuen Gesetzes nicht mehr grundsätzlich bestritten; Es geht vielmehr nur noch um weitere Vorschriften seitens der Jünger, die über Jesu eigene Gebote hinausgehen würden. Wie im Übergang von der griechischen Fassung des Thomasevangeliums zur koptischen ist also auch beim Mariaevangelium zu beobachten, dass ein ursprünglich scharfer Gegensatz abgemildert wird; was einst bestritten wurde, ist inzwischen mehr oder weniger akzeptiert, in diesem Fall die Vorstellung einer *nova lex*. Levi steht nicht mehr allein gegen Petrus und Andreas, freilich um den Preis einer Verschiebung dessen, was zu verkündigen ist.

Warum aber spielt ausgerechnet Levi hier eine so bedeutende Rolle, sonst im frühen Christentum doch eher eine Randfigur? Zu erinnern ist noch einmal an die eingangs dargestellte Beziehung

³⁴ Vgl. zum folgenden U. Kühneweg, *Das neue Gesetz. Christus als Gesetzgeber und Gesetz*, Marburg 1993, zum Mariaevangelium: pp. 99-100.

³⁵ LXX: ἐκ Σιών ἐξελεύσεται νόμος καὶ λόγος κυρίου ἐξ Ἱερουσαλήμ.

zwischen Levi und Matthäus. Wer immer im 2. Jahrhundert das Matthäusevangelium und daneben das Markus- oder das Lukasevangelium kannte, musste beide für ein und dieselbe Person unter verschiedenen Namen halten, wofür es in der Bibel auch andere Beispiele gibt.³⁶ Wenn nun im Mariaevangelium eine gesetzliche Fassung des Evangeliums ausdrücklich abgelehnt wird, die ihren deutlichsten Ausdruck im Matthäusevangelium gefunden hat, dann bot sich Levi, der "eigentliche" Matthäus, als Kronzeuge gegen das "falsche" Evangelium unter seinem anderen Namen an. Das gilt so aber nur für die griechische Fassung des Textes. In der koptischen Übersetzung dagegen kann Levi das bestätigen, was unter seinem Namen Matthäus geschrieben steht; abgewiesen wird nur noch, was an etwaigen Geboten darüber hinausgeht.

Schluß

Die aufgezeigte Kritik am Matthäusevangelium ist Episode geblieben. Schon in der Weitertradierung der ursprünglich griechischen Texte aus dem 2. Jahrhundert zeigt sich bei ihrer Übersetzung ins Koptische, wie stark das Matthäusevangelium die Sprache und die Gedankenwelt bereits der frühen Zeiten geprägt hat, so dass die Kritik weitgehend umgeformt wurde. Für die Trägerkreise der Übersetzung stellte eine neue Zeit andere Fragen als die, die Entstehung der Texte geprägt hatten. Weder der griechische Text noch der koptische erfuhren eine kontinuierliche Überlieferung über die Jahrhunderte bis in die Gegenwart; ihre Kenntnis verdanken wir mehr oder weniger zufälligen archäologischen Entdeckungen. Das Matthäusevangelium hingegen—wer immer es geschrieben hat—hat das Jesusbild von Generation zu Generation geprägt, nicht zuletzt dadurch, dass hier die Jesusüberlieferung unter die beiden Begriffe *vóμος* und

³⁶ Vgl. aus späterer Zeit Didymus von Alexandrien (PsT 184, 9-10), der freilich für eine andere Identifikation plädiert: "Und es gibt viele derartige Namensgleichheiten. Den Matthäus scheint sie (scil. die Schrift) im Lukasevangelium Levi zu nennen. Das ist aber nicht der, vielmehr sind der anstelle des Judas eingesetzte Matthias und Levi einer unter zwei Namen. Im Hebräerevangelium zeigt sich das"; M. Gronewald (ed.), *Didymos der Blinde. Psalmenkommentar (Tura-Papyrus)* 3, Berlin 1968, pp. 198-199.

δικαιοσύνη gestellt ist, die in seinen Quellen noch nicht zu finden sind,³⁷ in jeder Darstellung Jesu aber fast unvermeidlich scheinen.

³⁷ Das Fehlen von νόμος im Markusevangelium ist nur scheinbar erstaunlich, denn die Auseinandersetzung mit Pharisäern geht um deren zusätzliche Regeln, nicht um das Gesetz selber; für die Logienquelle vgl. allenfalls Q 16:16-17, wo νόμος die geschriebene Tora, den Pentateuch, meint.

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“BORN OF GOD” OR “BEGOTTEN BY GOD”? A TRANSLATION PROBLEM IN THE JOHANNINE WRITINGS

Maarten J.J. Menken

According to the Gospel and the First Epistle of John,¹ believers find their spiritual origin in God. One of the ways in which this idea is worded, is by means of the expression ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι, which is, as we shall see in detail below, translated either as “to be born of God” or as “to be begotten by God.” The expression occurs, with variations, in the following passages (I give the Greek text as printed in NA²⁷, and the two possible English translations):

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| John 1:13 | ... οἱ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς ἀλλ’ ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.
... who were born/begotten not of/by blood or the will of the flesh or the will of man but of/by God. |
| 1 John 2:29 | πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγέννηται.
Everyone who does justice has been born of/begotten by him. ² |
| 1 John 3:9 | πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει, καὶ οὐ δύναται ἁμαρτάνειν, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται.
Everyone who has been born of/begotten by God does not do sin, because his seed abides in him, and he cannot sin, because he has been born of/begotten by God. |
| 1 John 4:7 | πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται.
Everyone who loves has been born of/begotten by God. |
| 1 John 5:1 | πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν γεννήσαντα ἀγαπᾷ [καὶ] τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ.
Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of/begotten by God, and everyone who loves the one who begat also loves the one born of/begotten by him. ³ |

¹ I leave the precise relationship between these two writings aside. They are at any rate very close, and as far as the topic discussed in this article is concerned, so close that one can speak of “Johannine thought” or “Johannine theology.”

² In view of the other passages listed, “him” (αὐτοῦ) must refer to God.

- 1 John 5:4 πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον.
Whatever has been born of/begotten by God conquers the world.
- 1 John 5:18 πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει, ἀλλ' ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τηρεῖ αὐτόν.
Everyone who has been born of/begotten by God does not sin, but the one who was born of/begotten by God, he protects him.⁴

A series of related expressions, that should be taken into account as well, occurs in logia of Jesus in his dialogue with Nicodemus in John 3:3-8:

- John 3:3 εἰ μὴ τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.
Unless one is born/begotten from above,⁵ one cannot see the kingdom of God.
- John 3:5 εἰ μὴ τις γεννηθῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.
Unless one is born/begotten of water and Spirit, one cannot enter the kingdom of God.
- John 3:6 τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς σὰρξ ἐστίν, καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν.
What is born/begotten of the flesh is flesh, and what is born/begotten of the Spirit is spirit.
- John 3:7 δεῖ ὑμᾶς γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν.
You must be born/begotten from above.

³ The second clause can be read either as an expression of general human knowledge (about parent and child) or as a theological statement (in which τὸν γεννήσαντα refers to God and τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ to the believer).

⁴ The second clause can be translated and interpreted in various ways, depending upon, among other things, whether ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ refers to Christ or the believer (see R.E. Brown, *The Epistles of John*, New York 1982, pp. 620-622). To my mind, it is very unlikely that it refers to Christ; that would be an inexplicable exception to an otherwise consistent Johannine usage. To me, the best solution is that ὁ γεννηθεὶς is a pendent nominative, and that God is the subject of τηρεῖ; see K. Beyer, *Semitische Syntax im Neuen Testament 1. Satzlehre Teil 1*, Göttingen ²1968, pp. 216-217; R. Schnackenburg, *Die Johannesbriefe*, Freiburg ³1975, p. 280.

⁵ Because elsewhere in John ἄνωθεν always means "from above" (3:31; 19:11, 23), and because Johannine ambiguity always works with a physical and a spiritual understanding of one and the same meaning of a word, not with two different meanings of a word, there is no reason to assume that ἄνωθεν in 3:3, 7 could also mean "again"; see R. Schnackenburg, *Das Johannevangelium 1*, Freiburg ³1972, pp. 381-382.

John 3:8 οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος.
So it is with everyone born/begotten of the Spirit.

The question is which translation of γεννᾶσθαι we should prefer in all these instances: should we translate “to be born” or “to be begotten”? It is evident that the expression ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι and the like derives from metaphorical use of human reproduction, and within this context, the two translations are not completely at variance or very divergent. Nevertheless, there are real differences between them as regards the sexual role (male of female) ascribed to God. The question is therefore important enough to give it some attention.

I shall start with a look at the translation of the relevant Johannine passages in a selection of Bible translations and biblical studies, to get an idea of the spread and the influence of the two possible translations. Next, I shall present relevant lexical, grammatical and exegetical considerations, and these will finally lead to a conclusion on the translation to be preferred and some further thoughts on it.

1. *Extant Translations of the Relevant Johannine Passages*

In this section, I shall limit myself to the most important ancient versions and a representative selection of modern translations and commentaries. I start with the Latin translations. Old Latin and Vulgate are unanimous in offering in the instances in John 1:13 and 1 John the translation *ex* (or *de*) *Deo* (*eo, ipso*) *nasci*, “to be born of God,” and the verb *nasci* (or *renasci*) is used as well in John 3:3-8. There are two exceptions. In 1 John 5:1b, textual type T of the Old Latin has *genitus est ex eo*, “was begotten by him,” probably because of the preceding reference to τὸν γεννήσαντα (“the one who begat”), translated here as *genitorem*. In 1 John 5:18b, Old Latin and Vulgate have *generatio* (or *nativitas*) *Dei*, “birth of God,” for the Greek ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. This corresponds to the *lectio facilior* ἡ γέννησις θεοῦ found in some Greek minuscules.

Concerning the Syriac translations, I mention that in John 1:13 Curetonian Syriac and Peshiṭta use the verb *yld etpeal*, and that the same verb is used in John 3:3-8 in Curetonian and Sinaitic Syriac and Peshiṭta, in either *etpeal* or passive participle *peal*. These two forms of the verb are used as well in the Peshiṭta in the 1 John passages,

with the exception of 2:29, where we find the simple wording *mnh 'twhy*, "is of him." The two main Coptic translations are also consistent: the Sahidic has in all passages under discussion, the verb *jpo*, and the Bohairic has the verb *mise* (except in John 3:6; 1 John 5:1a, 18b, where it has the substantive *misi*, "offspring," "generation"). The difficulty is, however, that the Syriac and Coptic verbs used in the translations are just as ambiguous as the Greek verb γεννᾶν: they can mean both "to give birth to" and "to beget."⁶ So these ancient translations do not yield very much for our topic; only the Latin translations are unambiguous in preferring "to be born of God."

We turn to modern translations. Dutch Bible translations⁷ almost universally render γεννᾶσθαι ἐκ in the relevant Johannine passages as "geboren worden uit" ("to be born of").⁸ The Statenvertaling (1637), the Lutherse Vertaling (1648), the translation of A.M. Brouwer (1925), the Nieuwe Vertaling of the Netherlands Bible Society (1939), the revised Willibrordvertaling (1995) and the Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling (2004) are consistent on this point, with one minor exception: ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 John 5:18 has been rendered in the revised Willibrordvertaling as "de Zoon van God" ("the Son of God"), and in the Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling as "de Zoon, die uit God geboren werd" ("the Son, who was born from God"). The original Willibrordvertaling (1961) deviates from its revised successor in that ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι in 1 John 3:9a; 4:7; 5:1, 18a, as well as ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεννᾶσθαι in 1 John 2:29 have been paraphrased by "een kind van God zijn" ("to be a child of God").⁹ The Leidse Vertaling (1912) and the Petrus Canisiusvertaling (1929) also follow the general trend just observed, but they show exceptions to the rule. They have in 1

⁶ See R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, Hildesheim 1981 (repr. Oxford 1879-1901), sv *yld*; W.E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford 1939, sv *jpo* 1 and *mise* b. I am grateful to Dr J. van Amersfoort for help with the Coptic translations.

⁷ It seems fitting to start with the Dutch translations in a contribution offered to my esteemed Dutch colleague Henk Jan de Jonge.

⁸ A useful tool is *Het Nieuwe Testament in zes Nederlandse vertalingen*, 's-Gravenhage 1977, a synopsis of the Statenvertaling, the Lutherse Vertaling, the Leidse Vertaling, the translation of A.M. Brouwer, the Petrus Canisiusvertaling and the Nieuwe Vertaling of the Netherlands Bible Society.

⁹ The resulting difference between the translations of John's Gospel and of 1 John is very probably due to the circumstance that one biblical scholar (P.J. Cools) was finally responsible for the translation of the Gospels and Acts, and another (W.K. Grossouw) for the rest of the NT; see N. Tromp, "Rooms-katholieke vertalingen," in: H.W. Hollander (ed.), *Spectrum van bijbelvertalingen. Een gids*, Zoetermeer 1994, pp. 44-55, esp. 45, 47-48.

John 5:1b the translations "door Dezen verwekt is" and "door Hem is verwekt" respectively (English translation in both cases: "has been begotten by Him"). The capital shows in both cases that the clause has been read as a statement about God. The Leidse Vertaling has something comparable in John 1:13 ("verwekt zijn ... uit God," English translation: "have been begotten from God").

In the English translations which I consulted, the picture is not very different: the rendering "to be born of" is clearly dominant. The King James Version (1611) offers it in all passages under discussion, with the exception of 1 John 5:1b, 18b, where the translation "is begotten of" has been preferred. The Revised Standard Version (1946) and the New Revised Standard Version (1989) have "to be born of," except in 1 John 5:1, where the RSV has "child" twice, and the NRSV once only, in v. 1b. The New English Bible (1961) and its revision, the Revised English Bible (1989), tend to prefer the relatively free translation "God's child" and the like in 1 John, except in 5:18b, where we read "the Son of God." In the Gospel, "to be born of/from" is more or less standard, except that the NEB has in John 1:13 "the offspring of God himself."

A quick look at some German and French translations yields the same picture. Martin Luther's translation (1522; see also the revised version of 1984) consistently has "geboren werden von/aus." The Einheitsübersetzung (1980) has this translation in John's Gospel, but in 1 John it prefers "stammen von," except in 5:18b, where it has "der von Gott gezeugte." The French translation of Louis Segond (1880), the Bible de Jérusalem (1956) and the Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible (1975-1976) always have "naître de," except that, in the latter two, "engendrer" is used in the instances where the expression ἐκ (τοῦ) θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι is supposed to concern Jesus. The translator of John's Gospel in the Bible de Jérusalem (D. Mollat) preferred in John 1:13 the singular reading ἐγεννήθη, and translated "lui que ... Dieu a engendré."

From this (very incomplete) survey of modern translations, a clear trend appears to translate γεννᾶσθαι in the Johannine passages under discussion as "to be born" (or its equivalent in Dutch, German or French). This suggests that the free translations of ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι as "to be a child of God" and the like, which we sometimes found in 1 John, are just paraphrases of the translation "to be born of God." The passages where sometimes the translation "to be

begotten by God" has been preferred, are John 1:13; 1 John 5:1b, 18b. It is easily understood why these are the exceptions: in John 1:13 there is the contrast between "the will of man" and "God," in 1 John 5:1a the reference to τὸν γεννήσαντα ("the one who begat") makes the translation "the one begotten by him" obvious, and in 1 John 5:18b the need may have been felt to differentiate between the perfect participle γεγεννημένος and the aorist participle γεννηθείς (whether or not the latter is supposed to refer to Jesus).

While Bible translators strongly tend to interpret γεννᾶσθαι in this Johannine idiom as "to be born," modern commentators are not so unanimous. There are scholars who appear to assume, without much further reflection, that the translation "to be born" is the correct one.¹⁰ Often, however, this translation is preferred, but it is said somewhere that γεννᾶσθαι can also be rendered, maybe even more literally, by "to be begotten."¹¹ Concerning 1 John, D. Rusam explicitly argues that the translation "to be born" is the correct one;¹² his position will be discussed below. In W. Bauer's commentary on John, both translations (and the exegesis that corresponds to them) are presented as equivalent, even connected possibilities.¹³ In his study of the Johannine concept of divine sonship, M. Vellanickal argues that in his use of ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι, the author of John and 1 John "deliberately does not envisage the different moments of conception and birth." By consequence, the two translations "to be begotten by God" and "to be born of God" are interchangeable to him.¹⁴

¹⁰ So M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon saint Jean*, Paris ⁵1936, pp. 15, 74-78; F.J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, Collegeville 1998, pp. 33, 38, 88, 91-94, 98-100; S.S. Smalley, *J. 2, 3 John*, Waco 1984, pp. 91, 134-135, 151, 171-175, 233, 238, 266-267, 270, 292, 302-303; J.A. Trumbower, *Born from Above. The Anthropology of the Gospel of John*, Tübingen 1992, pp. 66-69, 71-76, 138-140; J.G. van der Watt, *Family of the King. Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel according to John*, Leiden 2000, pp. 166-188.

¹¹ So E.C. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (ed. F.N. Davey), London ²1947, p. 215, and further pp. 146-147, 203-204, 211-215 (he uses the RV); M. de Jonge, *Johannes. Een praktische bijbelverklaring*, Kampen 1996, p. 33, and further pp. 30, 51-52, 53-54; *id.*, *De brieven van Johannes*, Nijkerk 1968, pp. 148-149 (in this commentary, he makes use of the Nieuwe Vertaling of the Netherlands Bible Society); B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, London 1972, p. 91, and further pp. 92, 150-154 (he uses the RSV).

¹² D. Rusam, *Die Gemeinschaft der Kinder Gottes. Das Motiv der Gotteskindschaft und die Gemeinden der johanneischen Briefe*, Stuttgart 1993, pp. 111-118.

¹³ W. Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium*, Tübingen ³1933, pp. 50-54.

¹⁴ M. Vellanickal, *The Divine Sonship of Christians in the Johannine Writings*, Rome 1977; quotation from p. 100.

There are, however, also commentators, of both John's Gospel and 1 John (and not the least, I would say), who prefer for γεννᾶσθαι the translation "to be begotten." C.K. Barrett, for instance, writes on John 3:3: "γεννᾶν is commonly used of the father's act, 'to beget', and this is probably the right sense here; but it is occasionally used of the mother also, 'to bring forth', 'to bear'."¹⁵ Barrett refers in passing to H. Odeberg, who considered "water and Spirit" together (John 3:5) as a kind of spiritual semen,¹⁶ but Barrett thinks it is more likely that these words refer to Christian baptism as the means by which the believer receives the Spirit.¹⁷ R. Bultmann is explicit on John 1:13 and the passages in 1 John: they speak of a "Zeugung aus Gott."¹⁸ Concerning John 3:3-8, Bultmann thinks that John's source spoke of divine begetting, but the evangelist interpreted this in the sense of divine rebirth, for according to Bultmann, ἄνωθεν in John 3:3, 7 has to mean "again."¹⁹ The latter assertion is, however, dubious, if we take into account John 3:31; 19:11, 23, where ἄνωθεν cannot have any other meaning than "from above" (cf. n. 5 above). In his commentary on the Johannine Epistles, R. Schnackenburg translates in all passages in 1 John "aus Gott gezeugt" or something similar, and presupposes this translation in his exegesis;²⁰ he even speaks of "die feste joh. Vorstellung von der 'Zeugung aus Gott'."²¹ In his (later) commentary on John's Gospel, he is quite clear about 1:13: it concerns the "Zeugung aus Gott."²² On John 3:3-8, he is less consistent: although in his translation, he renders γεννᾶσθαι as "geboren werden,"²³ he speaks in the explanation that follows of both "Geburt" and "Zeugung," gradually preferring the latter.²⁴

¹⁵ C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John*, London ¹1978, p. 206; see further pp. 164, 205-211.

¹⁶ See H. Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel Interpreted in Its Relation to Contemporaneous Religious Currents in Palestine and the Hellenistic-Oriental World*, Amsterdam 1968 (repr. of the ed. Uppsala 1929), pp. 48-71.

¹⁷ Barrett, *St John*, 208-209.

¹⁸ R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, Göttingen 1941, pp. 37-38; *id.*, *Die drei Johannesbriefe*, Göttingen 1967, pp. 49-50.

¹⁹ Bultmann, *Evangelium des Johannes*, pp. 95-96, with 95 nn. 2 and 5.

²⁰ Schnackenburg, *Johannesbriefe*, pp. 163, 166-167, 184, 190-191, 228, 249, 251-253, 272, 279-281.

²¹ Schnackenburg, *Johannesbriefe*, p. 166.

²² Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium I*, pp. 208, 238-239.

²³ Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium I*, pp. 377-378.

²⁴ Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium I*, pp. 381-387.

Other scholars consistently prefer "to be begotten" as the best translation. In his monograph on the Johannine concept of "life," F. Mussner states that "Zeugung" is a more adequate translation than "Geburt."²⁵ R.E. Brown offers the translation "to be begotten" in John 1:13; 3:3-8,²⁶ and in his notes he explains that although the rendering "to be born" is also possible, John's idea of divine agency favours "to be begotten."²⁷ All instances in 1 John are translated and interpreted by him as concerning divine begetting.²⁸ H.-J. Klauck is equally unambiguous concerning 1 John: "gezeugt werden" is the translation to be preferred.²⁹ L.E. Keck prefers the translation "to be begotten" to "to be born" in John 1:13; 3:3-8, with the argument that "the point concerns the origin of life rather than the birthing process itself."³⁰ In 1 John, J. Beutler translates "gezeugt werden," but sometimes, he varies by "stammen von."³¹

Two general remarks should be made at this point. First, almost all authors who prefer "to be begotten," refer at some point in their argument to 1 John 3:9, where it is said about the one begotten by God, that "his seed abides in him" (σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει). They take this phrase (to which I shall return below) to mean that God's seed abides in the believer, and consider such speaking of divine seed as a serious argument in favour of their translation. Secondly, the reason why several authors take a rather firm stand on "to be begotten" to be the preferable translation in John 1:13 and the 1 John passages, but are more hesitant about John 3:3-8, is probably that in 3:4, Nicodemus retorts to Jesus' words on "being begotten from above" as the condition to see the kingdom of God (3:3) by saying: "How can a man γεννηθῆναι once he is old? Can he enter a second time into the womb of his mother and γεννηθῆναι?" In Nicodemus's second

²⁵ F. Mußner, *Zwölf. Die Anschauung vom "Leben" im vierten Evangelium unter Berücksichtigung der Johannesbriefe*, München 1952, pp. 118-127, esp. 120 n. 240.

²⁶ R.E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John (i-xii)*, Garden City 1966, pp. 3, 128.

²⁷ Brown, *John (i-xii)*, pp. 12, 130.

²⁸ Brown, *Epistles of John*, pp. 378, 384-387, 421-422, 512-513, 607.

²⁹ H.-J. Klauck, *Der erste Johannesbrief*, Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991, pp. 172, 175-177, 189, 193-194, 246-247, 283-285, 333-334, 336-337.

³⁰ L.E. Keck, "Derivation as Destiny: 'Of-ness' in Johannine Christology, Anthropology, and Soteriology," in: R.A. Culpepper/C.C. Black (eds), *Exploring the Gospel of John. Festschrift D.M. Smith*, Louisville 1996, pp. 274-288, esp. 275-278; quotation from n. 6 (p. 285).

³¹ J. Beutler, *Die Johannesbriefe*, Regensburg 2000, pp. 78, 81-82, 88, 107-109, 116, 118, 127, 131-132.

question, γεννηθῆναι has to mean "to be born," as it temporally seems to follow "entering a second time into the womb of his mother." In his first question, its meaning is less obvious; it could even be there a global indication of the whole process from begetting to birth. The point is that when Nicodemus echoes Jesus' words, he omits the essential ἄνωθεν, "from above." His misunderstanding of Jesus is a misunderstanding by omission,³² and because of the omission, the exact meaning of γεννηθῆναι becomes slightly vague. In any case, that γεννηθῆναι without any adjunct in 3:4 means "to be born,"³³ is not decisive for what it means in the rest of Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus. Nicodemus misunderstands Jesus' saying on the necessity to be begotten from above, and in his misunderstanding he broadens the meaning of an essential concept used by the Johannine Jesus.³⁴

2. Lexical, Grammatical and Exegetical Considerations

The lexicon of H.G. Liddell, R. Scott and H.S. Jones, and the one of W. Bauer, concur regarding the possible meanings of the verb γεννᾶν. As far as it refers to human procreation, it means with a male subject "to beget," and with a female subject "to bring forth," "to bear." In a more general sense, it can have the meaning "to produce," "to create," both in the physical and in the metaphorical sense.³⁵ If the verb is used with a male subject, ἐκ τινος can be added to refer to the female by whom the male begets the child (see, e.g., Matt. 1:3, 5, 6). In the passive, ἐκ τινος can be added to indicate either the female that bears the subject of the verb (see, e.g., Matt. 1:16), or the male that begets the subject of the verb. The latter construction is relevant to the use of ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι in the Johannine writings, if only for the fact that in these writings, God is called "Father" with great

³² See M.J.J. Menken, "Some Remarks on the Course of the Dialogue: John 6,25-34," *Bydragen. Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie* 48 (1987), pp. 139-149, esp. 142-144.

³³ As is also the case elsewhere in John, see 9:2, 19, 20, 32, 34; 16:21; 18:37; cf. further 8:41: ἐκ πορνείας γεννᾶσθαι, "to be born of fornication."

³⁴ Brown's translation has twice "to be born" in John 3:4, and "to be begotten" in the rest of 3:3-8, see *John* (i-xii), p. 128.

³⁵ LSJ, sv γεννᾶν; W. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur* (6th rev. ed. by K. and B. Aland), Berlin 1988, sv γεννᾶν. See also A. Kretzer, "γεννάω," *EWNT* 1, pp. 584-586.

frequency (see, e.g., John 5:19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26; 10:29, 30, 32, 36, 38; 1 John 2:14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24).³⁶

Nevertheless, Rusam has tried to demonstrate that in 1 John (and also in John's Gospel), ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι should be translated and interpreted as "to be born of God," and not as "to be begotten by God"; in his view, the Johannine God plays the roles of both father and mother, and the point of the expression under discussion is that God confers life. If I understand Rusam well, his main argument is that generally in Greek usage, in ἐκ τινος γεννᾶσθαι a noun indicating a female person follows the preposition ἐκ.³⁷ Such an assertion may be true as far as the NT is concerned,³⁸ but we should not forget then that the NT represents a very limited selection from ancient Greek literature. It is also quite possible that ἐκ τινος γεννᾶσθαι is more often said of birth than of begetting, but the question is how relevant such an observation is. It may well be that the passive construction is more easily used of the birth of a child, and the active one of the begetting of a child. So Rusam's reasoning should not be followed; instead, we should have a look at the use of ἐκ τινος γεννᾶσθαι with a male agent and thus with the meaning "to be begotten by" in Hellenistic Greek.

It may be true that, as Rusam states, ἐκ τινος γεννᾶσθαι with a male agent does not occur extremely often, but there are more than enough occurrences to show that it was a perfectly acceptable expression in Hellenistic Greek. Here are examples, mostly from the first centuries CE and presented, as far as possible, in what seems to be the most probable chronological order:

(1) In the *Suda*, we find a definition, ascribed to both Hyperides and Hecataeus: μοιχίδιον τὸν ἐκ μοιχοῦ γεγεννημένον, "an illegitimate child is the child begotten by an adulterer."

(2) In *De virtutibus* 208, Philo says about Isaac and his sons: ἐκ τοῦ δοκιμασθέντος κληρονόμου δύο δίδυμοι γεννῶνται, "by the one approved as heir, two twins were begotten."

³⁶ In John's Gospel, πατήρ without any modifier is even considered to be a characteristic of Johannine style. see G. Van Belle, *Les parenthèses dans l'évangile de Jean. Aperçu historique et classification. Texte grec de Jean*, Leuven 1985, p. 150.

³⁷ See Rusam, *Gemeinschaft der Kinder Gottes*, pp. 111-118. Rusam assumes similar ideas in Philo (pp. 114-116).

³⁸ Emphasized by Rusam, *Gemeinschaft der Kinder Gottes*, pp. 111-112.

(3) Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* I 7.2: Deucalion and Pyrrha had two sons, Ἑλλήν μὲν πρῶτος, ὃν ἐκ Διὸς γεγεννησθαι <ένιοι> λέγουσιν, "the first was Hellen, whom some say to have been begotten by Zeus." Pseudo-Apollodorus's *Bibliotheca* provides other examples as well, such as I 8.1: Μελέαγρον ὃν ἐξ Ἄρεος γεγεννησθαι φασι, "Melcager, whom they say to have been begotten by Ares"; II 5.1, where the Nemean lion is said to be ἐκ Τυφῶνος γεγεννημένον, "begotten by Typho"; III 91.6, where Callirhoe speaks of τοὺς γεγεννημένους ἐξ Ἀλκμαίωνος, "the ones begotten by Alcmaeon."

(4) According to Memnon, frg. 14 Jac., Ptolemaeus Keraunos married his halfsister Arsinoe, τοὺς ἐκ Λυσιμάχου δὲ παῖδας αὐτῇ γεγεννημένους ἀναιρεῖ, "and he killed the sons begotten by her by Lysimachus."

(5) Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum* 415E 4: thirty years is the period in which γεννῶντα παρέχει τὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεγεννημένον ὁ γεννήσας, "the begetter sees the one begotten by him begetting," that is, the period within which a son becomes a father himself.

(6) Pseudo-Plutarch, *De fluviis* 13.3, speaks of Αἰγέσθιος ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ Διός, "Aegesthius, who had been begotten by Zeus."

(7) Chariton, *De Chaerea et Callirhoe* II 11.5: when Callirhoe, pregnant by Chaereas, is going to marry Dionysius, she speaks of τὸ ἐξ ἄλλου γεννώμενον, "that what was begotten by another man." In III 2.3, Dionysius speaks of τὸ ἐξ ἐμοῦ γεννώμενον, "that what is begotten by me."

(8) In Lucian, *Dialogi deorum* 20.14, Aphrodite says to Paris about Leda's daughter Helena, that she is ἐκ κύκνου γεγεννημένην, "begotten by a swan" (which is Zeus in disguise).

(9) According to Phlegon, *De mirabilibus* 2.6, the deceased Polycritus appears to a crowd that threatens to burn his hermaphrodite child and requires them to give him τὸ παιδίον τὸ ἐξ ἐμοῦ γεγεννημένον, "the child begotten by me."

(10) Aelianus, *De natura animalium* 12.32, writes about Indian snakes who have killed a human being: οὔτε οἱ ἐξ αὐτοῦ γεννώμενοι γνωρίζουσι τὸν πατέρα, "and the ones begotten by him do not recognize their father."

(11) Cassius Dio, *Historiae Romanae* XVI 57, tells that Scipio was supposed ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς ἐς δράκοντα ἐν τῇ <πρὸς τὴν> μητέρα αὐτοῦ συνουσίᾳ μεταβαλόντος γεγεννησθαι, "to have been begotten

by Jupiter turned into a serpent during the intercourse with his mother."

(12) According to the *Historia Alexandri Magni*, rec. α, I 30.3-4, Alexander the Great remembers his mother saying ὥς ἐξ Ἀμμωνος ἐγεννήθη, "that he had been begotten by Ammon" (the Egyptian god Amon), and he says to the god: εἰ ἀληθεύει <ή> μήτηρ ἐκ σοῦ με γεγεννήσθαι, χρησµώδηςόν μοι, "if my mother rightly says that I have been begotten by you, deliver me an oracle."

(13) In the *Testament of Simeon* 2:2, Simeon says of himself: ἐγὼ ἐγεννήθην ἐξ Ἰακώβ τοῦ πατρός μου υἱὸς δεύτερος, "I was begotten by my father Jacob as his second son."

(14) According to Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.30, the Ebionites asserted about Jesus ἐξ Ἰωσήφ αὐτὸν γεγεννήσθαι, "that he had been begotten by Joseph." See also 3.33: τὸν δεύτερον Ἀδὰμ λέγειν αὐτοὺς ἐξ Ἰωσήφ γεγεννήσθαι, "they say that the second Adam had been begotten by Joseph."

(15) In the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* 6.2, Pluto, devoured by his father Cronos, is called γεννηθὲν ἐξ αὐτοῦ βρέφος, "the child begotten by him."

(16) *Scholia in Aeschylum* (scholia vetera), sch. 1c on *Septem contra Thebas*: ἐκ τοῦ Ἀγήνορος ἐγεννήθησαν ὁ Κάδμος καὶ ὁ Κίλιξ καὶ <ή> Εὐρώπη, "by Agenor were begotten Cadmus, Cilix and Europa."

(17) *Scholia in Homeri Iliadem* (scholia vetera), on *Il.* II 547: Erichthonius is said to be γεννηθέντος ἐκ τοῦ Ἥφαίστου, "begotten by Hephaestus."

The examples of the above list (which is by no means complete) are spread in time and geographical area, and the begetters to which they refer, are gods and divine beings, human beings and animals. The passages quoted have not been influenced by the Johannine language of ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι. They clearly show that γεννᾶσθαι ἐκ with a male agent was a normal way of speaking, meaning "to be begotten by."

Of course variants of the expression occur as well. Both the male and female agents that together produce offspring can be mentioned after the preposition, so that the two primary meanings of γεννᾶν, "to

beget" and "to give birth," are present at the same time.³⁹ Instead of the preposition ἐκ, we also find ἀπό or ὑπό with the genitive.⁴⁰ This is not surprising, given the fact that with the passive, ὑπό with the genitive is the most usual way to express the agent, but ἀπό is also fairly frequent in this role,⁴¹ and ἐκ is found as well to indicate the agent with the passive.⁴² The three prepositions that can be used for the male agent with the passive γεννᾶσθαι are apparently, to a certain extent, interchangeable, but in any case, ἐκ is quite normal in this context,⁴³ so that ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι in the Johannine writings should be translated as "to be begotten by God."

In addition to these lexical and grammatical considerations, there is also an exegetical argument (already hinted at above) for preferring this translation. In 1 John 3:9, we read: πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἁμαρτίαν οὐ ποιεῖ, ὅτι σπέρμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ μένει, "everyone who has been begotten by God does not do sin, because his seed abides in him." Before this statement can function in the argument, some obscurities in it have to be clarified. The possessive genitive αὐτοῦ can refer in theory to either God or the believer ("everyone who has been begotten by God"); but as the latter possibility does not make sense, we have to prefer the former. The questions are then: does σπέρμα αὐτοῦ mean "God's offspring" or "God's semen," and to whom does αὐτῷ refer?

³⁹ See, e.g., Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* I 23.7.5: ἐκ Σεμέλης καὶ Διὸς γεγεννησθαι τὸν Διονύσιον, "Dionysus was born of Semele and Zeus"; Philo, *Spec.* IV 182: ὁ γεννηθεὶς ... ἐκ τῶν ἀρίστων, "the one born from the best parents."

⁴⁰ With ἀπό, e.g., the Greek version of *1 En.* 15:8: οἱ γίγαντες οἱ γεννηθέντες ἀπὸ τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ σαρκός, "the giants, who have been born of spirits and flesh" (cf. Gen. 6:4); Heb. 11:12: ἅψ' ἐνὸς ἐγεννήθησαν, "they were begotten by one person." With ὑπό, e.g., Isocrates, *Hel. enc.* 16: πλείστων γὰρ ἡμιθέων ὑπὸ Διὸς γεννηθέντων ... "for although a multitude of demigods had been begotten by Zeus ..."; Josephus, *Ant.* I 150: Ἐβραεὺς ... γεννηθεὶς αὐτὸς ὑπὸ Σέλου, "Heber ... having been begotten himself by Seles" (cf. Gen. 11:14).

⁴¹ See F. Blass/A. Debrunner, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (ed. F. Rehkopf), Göttingen ¹⁶1984, § 210.2; L. Radermacher, *Neutestamentliche Grammatik. Das Griechisch des Neuen Testaments im Zusammenhang mit der Volkssprache*, Tübingen 1925, p. 139; E. Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik 2. Syntax und syntaktische Stilistik* (ed. A. Debrunner), Munich 1950, p. 446; M. Zerwick, *Biblical Greek, Illustrated by Examples* (ed. J. Smith), Rome 1963, no. 90; N. Turner, *Syntax*, vol. 3 of J.H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Edinburgh 1963, p. 258.

⁴² As in, e.g., Xenophon, *Anab.* I 1:6; 2 Cor. 1:11; 2:2; 7:9; Justin, *1 Apol.* 12.5; *Dial.* 18.3; for other examples, see LSJ, sv ἐκ III.5; Bauer, *Wörterbuch*, sv ἐκ 3.e.α; Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik 2*, p. 463.

⁴³ The preposition ἐκ may retain here something of its local sense; this could explain the preference for this preposition with the passive of γεννᾶν.

In itself, σπέρμα may obviously mean “offspring”; that is the meaning of the word wherever it occurs in John’s Gospel (7:42; 8:33, 37), and it is frequently found elsewhere (see in the NT, e.g., Mark 12:19-20; Gal. 3:16; Rev. 12:17). “God’s offspring” could then refer either to Christ or to the Christians. If it refers to Christ, αὐτῷ has to refer to the Christian, and the resulting idea that Christ abides in the believer is certainly Johannine (see John 6:56; 15:4-5). The difficulty is, however, that Christ is called “offspring of David” or “offspring of Abraham” (e.g., in Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8), but “he is never called the *sperma* of God.”⁴⁴ If “God’s offspring” refers to the Christians,⁴⁵ αὐτῷ has to refer to God, and again, the resulting idea of the believer abiding in God is Johannine (see, e.g., 1 John 2:6; 4:13). Here, however, we run once more into the problem that the terminology would be most unusual: Christians are called “offspring of Abraham” (Gal. 3:29; Heb. 2:16) or of the woman who gave birth to the Messiah (Rev. 12:17), but not “offspring of God.” If Christ or the Christians are described as the σπέρμα of somebody, this somebody is a human being, not God. Besides, apart from the passage under discussion Johannine language is consistent in calling Jesus the υἱός, “son,” of God, and the Christians the τέκνα, “children,” of God (see, e.g., in the immediate context of the passage under discussion: 1 John 3:1, 2, 8, 10, 23).

Interpreting σπέρμα αὐτοῦ as “God’s offspring” in 1 John 3:9 apparently leads nowhere. We have to translate “God’s seed,” and we have to suppose that σπέρμα stands in some way for God’s generative power. More specifically, it can stand for either God’s word or God’s Spirit. The former interpretation finds support in passages such as Jas 1:18 and 1 Pet. 1:23, but in the Johannine writings, God’s word and his begetting are not associated. The latter interpretation, that the seed stands for God’s Spirit, fits in very well with John 3:5,

⁴⁴ Brown, *Epistles of John*, p. 408.

⁴⁵ So A. W. Argyle, “1 John iii. 4f.,” *ExpTim* 65 (1953-1954), pp. 62-63; J. De Waal Dryden, “The Sense of σπέρμα in 1 John 3:9. In Light of Lexical Evidence,” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 11 (1998), pp. 85-100. Argyle argued for this interpretation on the basis of a presumed allusion, in 1 John 3:9, to Isa. 53:10 LXX (ἡ ψυχὴ ὑμῶν ὀψεται σπέρμα μακρόβιον, “Your soul will see a long-lived offspring”); on the relation between 1 John 3:4-7 and Isaiah 53, see M.J.J. Menken, “‘The Lamb of God’ (John 1,29) in the Light of 1 John 3,4-7,” in: G. Van Belle (ed.), *The Death of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, Leuven 2007, pp. 581-590.

8, where the believer is said to be "begotten of the Spirit," and seems to be the preferable one.⁴⁶

So the way in which 1 John 3:9 speaks of "God's seed," supports the translation of ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι as "to be begotten by God." This passage from 1 John also confronts us with the limits of the metaphor of procreation in its application to God and his Spirit, for in the human process of procreation the seed does not "abide," whereas the Spirit "abides" with those in whom God has generated life (cf. John 14:16-17). The metaphor is also, so to speak, transcended by the reality aimed at insofar as in the process of spiritual procreation, there is no female principle; there is only God, also called "Father," who begets, no mother is mentioned at the divine level. In this respect, Johannine thought shows some similarity to Philo's thinking. In *Quis rerum divinarum haeres* 62, Philo argues that Sarah, identified with "Virtue," is the motherless principle ἐκ πατρὸς τοῦ πάντων θεοῦ μόνου γεννηθεῖσα, "begotten by her father, the God of all, alone" (Philo does so on the basis of Abraham's words to Abimelech in Gen. 20:12: "She is truly my sister from the father, not from the mother"). Later in the same treatise (216), he says that God ἐβδομάδα τὴν ἀμήτορα γεγέννηκεν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ μόνου, "has begotten seven, the motherless one, from himself alone." Moses found, according to Philo (*De vita Mosis* II 210), that the holy seventh day was ἀμήτορα ... ἐκ μόνου πατρὸς σπαρεῖσαν ἄνευ σπορᾶς καὶ γεννηθεῖσαν ἄνευ κυήσεως, "motherless ... sown by the Father alone without seed and begotten without conception." In both the Johannine writings and Philo, there is on the divine level only one generating principle, represented as male and begetting. How the child that is begotten, comes into the world, is a question that is not asked and that is actually irrelevant, because God's life-giving activity is the point of the metaphor.

Conclusion

In spite of the almost universal tendency of Bible translators, both ancient and modern, to render the Johannine ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεννᾶσθαι as "to be born of God," the evidence collected in the preceding

⁴⁶ See Schnackenburg, *Johannesbriefe*, pp. 190-191; Brown, *Epistles of John*, pp. 408-411; Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, pp. 172-174; Klauck, *Der erste Johannesbrief*, pp. 193-194; Beutler, *Johannesbriefe*, p. 88.

section clearly points in the direction of the alternative rendering “to be begotten by God” as the correct one. The same can be said, *mutatis mutandis*, about ἄνωθεν γεννᾶσθαι and related expressions in John 3:3-8. We have seen that several modern commentators of John’s Gospel and 1 John prefer to translate γεννᾶσθαι in all these Johannine instances by “to be begotten”; they are right. Future Bible translators should no longer slavishly follow the translation tradition, but instead take the evidence presented into account.

Admittedly, the two translations “to be born” and “to be begotten” do not result in very divergent statements when the metaphor is transposed into direct language: in both, God is said to be the source of the believer’s new life. However, either of the two translations involves other elements of the metaphorical field of human reproduction, and thus leads to another emphasis in direct statement. In contrast to “to be born,” the translation “to be begotten” clearly ascribes a metaphorical male sexual role to God: he is compared to a father who begets children. Perhaps some will not like this male aspect in the representation of God very much, but it is simply the way the Johannine God is pictured. The male sexual role metaphorically ascribed to God emphasizes divine agency: God is the one who initiates the new life of the believer. A translation of John’s Gospel or 1 John should leave the metaphor intact and pass on this side of the Johannine view of God to the reader or hearer. Only then hermeneutical questions can be asked.

A final issue concerns the origin of the Johannine metaphor of divine begetting. Old Testament and Judaism yield some materials that may have served as inspiration for it,⁴⁷ but the overall result is not impressive. There are a few parallels in the NT.⁴⁸ It has been observed more than once that Hellenistic thought, mystery cults and gnosticism insofar as they are more or less contemporary with the Johannine writings, display verbal similarities but no exact parallels.⁴⁹ Closest to Johannine thought in this respect is Philo, who in his allegorical explanation has Sarah, the patriarchs or the number seven

⁴⁷ See Deut. 32:18; Ps. 2:7; 110:3 LXX; Prov. 8:25 LXX; Isa. 1:2 LXX; 1QSa II 11-12.

⁴⁸ See 1 Pet. 1:3, 23, with ἀναγεννᾶν. For another metaphorical use of “begetting” in the NT, see 1 Cor. 4:15; Phlm. 10, with γεννᾶν and Paul as subject.

⁴⁹ See Schnackenburg, *Johannesbriefe*, pp. 175-183; Brown, *Epistles of John*, pp. 384-387; Klauck, *Der erste Johannesbrief*, pp. 175-176.

be begotten by God.⁵⁰ The difference is obviously that in Philo’s thought, God begets abstract entities and souls, while in Johannine thought, he begets people of flesh and blood to a new life. The Johannine author (or authors) apparently takes up an extant but not very widespread motif, and makes it into one of his fundamental images to describe the relationship between God and the believer. This relationship is “eternal life” (see esp. John 17:3), and eternal life starts with the Christian being “begotten by God” through the Spirit in baptism as the confirmation of his or her belief in Jesus (John 3:5).⁵¹

⁵⁰ See *Leg.* II 47; III 219; *Post.* 135; *Conf.* 145; *Migr.* 142; *Mut.* 137-138; *Somn.* I 173, 181; further the Philonic passages quoted at the end of the preceding section. In all cases, the verb γεννᾶν is used with God as agent.

⁵¹ I thank Dr J.M. Court for checking my English.

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MAKING EDITIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TODAY

David C. Parker

A recent press release seemed to mirror all the worst fears of the contemporary philologist:

After seven months of writing day and night, a robot in Germany clutching a fountain pen has completed a “manuscript” Bible in cursive handwriting ... The machine, dubbed “Bios (Bible),” began copying the Bible in June onto a 900-metre-long roll of paper, with its arm forming each letter with the pen after all 66 books of scripture had been loaded into its memory. “It’s just a working machine, yet it’s a participant in society,” said Gommel. The robot was thus a “mediator” in the process of social communication. Asked why they chose the bible, Zappe said, “Because it is one of the most significant books of the age and contains a huge amount of data.” The group did not explain how the robot misspelled two of the 800,000 words.¹

Generally speaking, the computer appears to ring the knell of traditional philology, by replacing the decision-making of the scholar, based on a natural bent, a thorough training and extensive knowledge, with an automated process in which all editorial acts are based on predetermined criteria. Since it is one of the axioms of textual criticism that every variant reading may represent a unique situation, the blind decisions of a computer are the worst possible way of making a critical text. Indeed, the critical text by its very nature represents everything that a computer can never achieve.

And yet, the story of the robot as scribe is not all bad news for the scholar. Apparently, although the entire text and every action was pre-ordained by the programme, even this production process offers the opportunity for inexplicable scribal activity. And it is refreshing that the report offers the opportunity to exercise one’s power’s of conjectural emendation (“Bios,” *leg.* “Biblos”).

Is the computer a machine that is replacing the traditional artefact (the critical text) produced by the individual skills of the craftsman

¹ <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/178999,robot-scribe-copies-the-bible-as-a-performance-art-event.html>.

(the critical editor) with a mass-produced item? Can we envisage a situation in which the world will be filled with more critical editions than there have ever been, but critical editions lacking that insight and distinctive understanding which is the hallmark of an individual scholar's lifetime dedicated to the text of a single author? Does the rise of the computer require the decline of the philologist? One does not have to be so pessimistic. Indeed, one should not regard the machine as an enemy, nor even as a neutral which will leave philologists alone so long as they leave it alone. Rather, the computer, not the least wonderful product of the human brain, offers its services as a loyal ally to the philologist who has the ability and skill to understand it and bend it towards philological goals.

This is as true in the field of New Testament studies as anywhere else in textual scholarship. Indeed, there is good reason to argue that the text of the New Testament particularly demands such research. It is striking that the team who produced the Bible robotically chose it "Because it is one of the most significant books of the age and contains a huge amount of data." The same two grounds apply to the use of computers in philological research. The continuing cultural importance of the texts enhances the likelihood of funding and of visibility for electronic projects, whose advances may then be applied elsewhere. And it is certainly true that with regard to the amount of data, the New Testament poses some formidable challenges. There are other much longer texts, but the number of variety of witnesses is distinctive. One should not claim that the New Testament contains the hardest set of texts to edit. Nevertheless, it has to be edited from up to two thousand manuscripts, along with versions and patristic citations. This means that there is a huge amount of material to be collected, analysed and presented, an amount which individuals can no longer handle.

The role of the computer in making it possible for the editor to study and to edit this information in a coherent fashion is essential. It would certainly be an error to assume that this means that it is more convenient. At the present juncture, scholars who use computers to make editions are having to deal with a variety of technical problems and challenges which often means that the editorial task itself has to be suspended until the difficulty is resolved. It is certainly not the case at present that the computer necessarily makes the task easier or quicker. Nor can it ever be said that an edition made with computer

assistance is necessarily superior. It will only ever be as good as the quality of the editorial concepts and execution that have formed the edition. However, if the quality is good, the computer can be used to make the edition better. It is the purpose of this contribution, dedicated to a scholar who is himself a philologist with the highest standards, to justify this contention.

This topic is best discussed under two heads. The first is textual theory and in particular stemmatology. The second is the structure of critical editions.

1. *Textual Theory*

One might argue that by the third quarter of the last century, textual criticism had become so successful in collecting data that it had made unattainable its goal of producing a new edition of the text. That the Critical Greek Testament and its successor the International Greek New Testament Project considered it sufficient to produce *thesauri* of readings indicates how hard it was both to bring together the critical material and to use it to make a critical text.² Indeed, if one looks back to the previous century, Westcott and Hort felt able to make a new text, but not to compile an apparatus.³ The reason for this is fairly clear: when scholarship proceeded by making collations of witnesses against the *textus receptus*, such collations were universally useful as lists of readings which could be incorporated with other such lists into *apparatus critici*. However, the task of re-aligning them against a new critical text was never going to be easy. One might even suggest that Tischendorf was the only person ever to succeed to do so.⁴ The computer, however, has put back into the editor's hands the opportunity to produce both a critical text and as full an apparatus as is desired. The tools which make this possible are the full electronic transcription, the electronic comparison of the transcrip-

² S.C.E. Legg, *Nouum Testamentum graece secundum textum Westcotto-Hortianum*, Oxford 1935 (*Euangelium secundum Marcum*) and 1940 (*Euangelium secundum Matthaeum*); *The New Testament in Greek. The Gospel According to St Luke*, edited by the American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project 1-2, Oxford 1984-1987.

³ B.F. Westcott/F.J.A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* 1-2, London 1881.

⁴ C. Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum graece ... Editio octava critica maior* 1-2, Leipzig 1872-1884.

tions, and the subsequent creation of a database. A very brief glance at the growth of the apparatus will illustrate this.

The tiny number of authorities who are (partially) cited in Stephanus' edition of 1550 provide a number of generally small variants which may easily be known and controlled by the user.⁵ These variants are a random small selection from a tiny number of witnesses. Their interest lies in the fact of their presence. Technically speaking, their inclusion was not a challenge. Even the far, far larger apparatus compiled by John Mill, containing according to a contemporary an estimated 30,000 variants, consists of a selection of the evidence.⁶ And it too can be comparatively easily controlled by an editor. The closest one comes in the older period to what may be achieved today is in Hoskier's collation of all the witnesses to Revelation.⁷ The work has certain difficulties, occasioned by the bulk of evidence. In fact it is very hard to use. To what degree Hoskier was able to control the material may be questioned. One may contrast this with an edition which is based upon full transcriptions of all witnesses, Wasserman's edition of Jude, which presents all variants (over one hundred) in all Greek manuscripts (there are 560 witnesses).⁸ The challenges of presenting so much evidence in a standardised manner, even of transferring the information about individual witnesses into the apparatus, are formidable. And this is true even of so short a text as the Epistle of Jude, when the edition is restricted to Greek witnesses.

But beyond this type of challenge, there is an even more serious problem with philology of the New Testament if it is practiced with traditional (non-electronic) tools. It is this: How is one to control so much and such complicated material? That is to say, how is one to know enough of it to be able to make consistent decisions about the relationship between the readings? Consistency in this context assumes that the editor accepts the point of view that there is a stemmatological relationship between the forms of text at each point of variation and thus between the witnesses, and consequently that the manuscripts are descended from the archetype of the tradition. That is to say, it is here assumed that the editor believes that it is necessary to make a convincing set of decisions about the way in which variant

⁵ R. Stephanus, *Nouum Testamentum*, Paris 1550.

⁶ J. Mill, *Novum Testamentum graecum*, Oxford 1707.

⁷ H.C. Hoskier, *Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse* etc. 1-2, London 1929.

⁸ T. Wasserman, *The Epistle of Jude. Its Text and Transmission*, Lund 2006.

forms of the text developed from the oldest to the newest, and that these decisions should result in a convincing stemma of the manuscripts. This assumption, what is known as Lachmannian theory, was challenged on the grounds that it was powerless in the face of contamination. However, it may be the case that the difficulties are not inherent in the method, but result from the limitations of pre-electronic tools. In the past, research, like editions, tended to be conducted on the basis of partial examination of selected witnesses. With regard to the selection of witnesses, this was no doubt partly due to the difficulties of research before the invention of the microfilm; by contrast, today it is a principle that at least initial analysis of texts should be based on study of all extant witnesses.

More serious, though, is the matter of partial examination of witnesses. According to traditional techniques, one of the most important ways of establishing agreement between witnesses was by discovering agreement in error. It remains the case that the presence of a very distinctive reading, unlikely to have arisen independently in two strands of the tradition, is as striking an indicator of genealogical affiliation as any other kind of evidence, including palaeographical (such as a shared omission of a block of text). Nevertheless, to depend upon such striking, and generally rare evidence, may be something of a counsel of despair, since the most obvious way to measure similarity between any two items, including the text of two documents, is to test the extent of their agreement rather than their disagreement against other items.⁹ This is very difficult to achieve in pencil-and-paper work, which is only possible by listing differences, which are then quantified by comparison with other witnesses. However, one may use full electronic transcriptions to provide accurate measures of the degree of similarity between any two or more witnesses. That this leads to important advances is shown by some of the surprises found in the pages of analysis in the *Text und Textwert* series.¹⁰ In fact, what is possible today is a complete examination of

⁹ For an exposition of this topic ("The course of New Testament textual criticism since Hort's day has endorsed his rejection of the 'agreement in error criterion'"), see E.C. Colwell/E.W. Tunc, "Variant Readings: Classification and Use," *JBL* 83 (1964), pp. 253-261, esp. 257-258; reprinted as "Method in Classifying and Evaluating Variant Readings," in: E.W. Colwell, *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Leiden 1969, pp. 96-105, esp. 101-102.

¹⁰ K. Aland et al. (eds), *Text und Textwert der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*, Berlin/New York 1987ff.

the text of all extant witnesses. (In practice, with the exception of Wasserman's edition of Jude, this has been limited to selected passages, this evidence providing the basis for selection of witnesses representative of the entire tradition, which may then be fully compared.) In such a context, striking individual agreements may turn out to have a different significance than had been earlier supposed. For example, they may indicate a comparatively close genealogical relationship between an ancient and a more modern witness, even though the more recent one turns out to be overall a witness to the Byzantine text form.¹¹

The much greater precision which may be achieved by such comparison is further supported by the variety of tools being developed to make use of it. In particular, the phylogenetic approaches which have been pioneered in recent years provide not an alternative to traditional stemmatics, but a refinement of them. There is a further matter to be considered very carefully in this regard. Much of the twentieth-century was characterised by increasing despair with so-called Lachmannian stemmatics. A few quotations bear this out:

[I]t is clear that in a field where no manuscripts have parents, where centuries and continents separate witnesses, the genealogical method is not of primary importance. Its importance lies in the realm of provincial history... But in the larger realm where the larger questions are settled, it still has to demonstrate its value for reconstruction of the original text of the Greek New Testament.¹²

The lack of definitive theory and history of the early text and the lack of progress in critical editions has caused, during the twentieth century, a chaotic situation in the evaluation of variant readings in the New Testament text.¹³

¹¹ An example of this is 162, a twelfth-century manuscript containing the addition in Luke 11:2 ἐλθέτω τὸ πνεῦμα ἅγιον καὶ καθαρῶσάτω ἡμᾶς. According to *Text und Textwert*, it is a manuscript with 96% majority readings (all but two out of 54 readings). For the examples of 565 and 614, see D.C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts*, Cambridge 2008, Chapters 10.4.4 and 9.2.2.

¹² E.C. Colwell, "Genealogical Method: its Achievements and its Limitations," *JBL* 66 (1947), pp. 109-133, reprinted in: *id.*, *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, pp. 63-83, esp. 82-83.

¹³ E.J. Epp, "The Twentieth Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism," *JBL* 93 (1974), pp. 386-414, esp. 404; reprinted in E.J. Epp/G.D. Fee, *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism*, Grand Rapids 1993, pp. 83-108, esp. 98; again

According to Colwell, the Lachmannian theory of the significance of agreement in error was rejected in favour of a search for agreement in readings. Yet this too was based upon the study of selected readings. And such a study of selected readings led to the various methodologies with which we are familiar: eclecticism, in which the agreement of groups of witnesses at a number of passages where they are reliable is used as a guide to assessing their character in places where they differ and the situation is not so certain (applied for example in the use of Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus as generally reliable); and in what is known as thorough-going eclecticism, where the attestation for a reading is irrelevant. Both these methodologies are now due for a thorough review in the light of what is new about computer-aided editions, namely the use of all the textual evidence in the way which has been outlined. It is worth commenting on the challenge to each.

As time has gone on, eclecticism has been perceived to be rather closely related to the theory of text-types. This may be observed, for example, in the types of quantitative analysis used in *The New Testament in the Greek Fathers* series.¹⁴ In this methodology, the type of text known to an early Christian writer is determined by the degree of its similarity to or difference from a number of text-types, these types being determined by the text form of representatives of each. One of the challenges to this approach is determining an appropriate distance between the groups so that they are distinguishable, since there needs to be clear water between them for any safe conclusions to be drawn. This becomes much more problematical once one is dealing with all the evidence in a great many more witnesses. What in fact happens is that quantitative analysis turns out to be a rather blunt tool for the job.

To the thorough-going eclecticist, the construction of a stemma is not important. If one believed with G.D. Kilpatrick that all variant readings had come into existence by about 200, and that the number and age of the manuscripts in which they survived was irrelevant, then at each point of variation one would have no more to do than to

E.J. Epp, *Perspectives on New Testament Textual Criticism. Collected Essays. 1962-2004*, Leiden 2005, pp. 59-100, esp. 83.

¹⁴ And it is worth adding that the elimination of singular readings, so often stressed as important if statistics are not to be distorted, is in my view really mistaken, and no longer necessary using "all-the-evidence" types of analysis.

apply appropriate criteria in order to determine which was the reading from which the others were derived. If the manuscripts are of value only as vehicles for ancient variant readings, and not as representatives of individual text-forms, then indeed consistency between reconstruction of the development of text-forms and reconstruction of manuscript relationships is an irrelevant goal. Yet the situation is not quite so simple. What could one mean by stating that all readings had come into existence by 200? Surely this could not apply to conflating readings of the Byzantine tradition, nor to readings caused by scribal confusions of one kind or another, since these appear whenever a scribe works. However, what must give the thorough-going eclecticist pause for thought now is the need to consider whether stemmatology is as useless as has been supposed. The kind of "genealogical" approach currently being propounded as the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method is sufficiently different from its predecessors for a careful reconsideration. The same is true of stemmatics which uses phylogenetic models drawn from the natural sciences in order to study the relationship between manuscripts. If this new stemmatics is able to cast new light on the process by which variant readings came into being, the basic assumptions of thorough-going eclecticism will require fresh examination.

Be that as it may, the question needs to be asked whether the computer may not serve a useful purpose for the thorough-going eclecticist in studying and controlling data. There is evidence that it can, and in several ways. The first is that in providing a searchable database of the whole text of every witness transcribed, the computer provides far more evidence for studying the kind of material which is needed, namely evidence relating to usage in the witnesses, from whose study conclusions may be drawn with regard to authorial usage. Anyone who has tried to find out about such questions as differences in verbal forms, asyndeton and the article will know how unsatisfactory the traditional lexicon, concordance and critical edition are in providing consistent and relevant information. The electronic edition transforms the situation. It makes it possible for scholars to record the different forms in classes of variation and to keep track of their own decisions.

This last possibility is suggested by consideration of the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method, which as a way of recording

editorial decisions may be seen to function as a neutral umpire.¹⁵ What is essential is the concept of reconstructing a stemma of readings at each place of variation. This is because contamination is irrelevant in any one single unit of variation. Each stemma is recorded in a database which contains all the textual forms of every witness. The resultant body of stemmata provide for each pair of witnesses and for the whole tradition a pattern of textual flow. If all the data were to reach the same conclusion with regard to the relationship between the witnesses, one would have a perfectly coherent stemma of the entire tradition. In practice, this is highly unlikely because of the presence of contamination, and one must expect to find that a proportion of readings go against the flow of the majority. Only where the textual flow between two witnesses is perfectly balanced could one say that contamination has made it impossible to decide which manuscript is more likely to represent a prior stage in the textual tradition. This method is possible because the computer records thousands of decisions about textual variation in hundreds of variants. It makes it possible for editors to be in control of their material, and more self-critical, than has ever been possible before. In effect, the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method is a philological construct which utilises the computer as an essential tool for editors in controlling and monitoring their own editorial activity. It is possible to use the computer even as a co-editor, who will answer one's self-questioning with informed and reliable answers. Bengel suggested to the editor "Apply yourself to the text and the text to yourself." We may add the suggestion "Apply yourself to the text, the text to the computer and the computer to yourself."

2. The Structure of Critical Editions

When one turns to the form and nature of today's editions, the role of the computer is probably less contentious, even though there is in practice some reluctance to use electronic versions of texts—a reluctance which will surely fade with time. It is not clear how much New Testament scholars are tapping into the new and rich resources

¹⁵ The method has been described in various places. Details of publications are available at <http://uni-muenster.de/NTTextforschung/>.

which are becoming available. Yet online editions such as the Digital Nestle-Aland, www.iohannes.com and various commercial tools are only beginning to develop what will become available. The following paragraphs are therefore more than a description of what is currently available, or even what is possible. They offer also considerations of what is needed for the electronic edition to be more than an imitation of a printed book and to come of age.

Traditionally, largely for practical reasons, various basic tools for informed study of the New Testament have been published separately: lists and descriptions of manuscripts, transcriptions of important witnesses, facsimiles, bibliographies, critical editions, concordances and lexica. The process of producing these tools has more or less followed the order given, certainly in that lists and bibliography of witnesses precede critical editions, which are in turn followed by concordances and lexica. The critical edition with apparatus is a distillation of information from the study of the witnesses, and the concordances and lexica are a further distillation from the critical text, often with at most a nod in the direction of the apparatus. The result of this process is that a rich textual environment (the variation of forms in the manuscripts) leads to a rather sterile one (lists and descriptions of words based on a single textual form). The electronic edition offers a far more flexible tool, consisting of all the tools which have hitherto been separated. Because the electronic edition contains at its heart full transcriptions of the witnesses in a database, it is possible to list and describe every word that is found in the manuscript tradition, and thus to study developments in morphology, orthography and meaning as well as to examine the relationship between the variant readings. Technically, we may observe that the governing principle of the print editions is the critical text, because that is the fixed point from which the apparatus depends. As the editor's attempt to reconstruct the oldest available form of text, it remains of great importance. But it is no longer the tool which links everything together. That is provided by the database underlying all the features. In a fully integrated edition, the concordance will record not only every word present in the critical text, but will add all further forms which are found somewhere in the manuscript tradition. Likewise the lexicon can provide further historical information on the development of usages.

Moreover, since the full transcription of each manuscript is present, it seems wholly appropriate to provide the user with the opportunity to be placed in a closer relationship to the tradition by linking an image (preferably a digital colour image) to every page of transcription. And if this material is to be interpreted, then information about the manuscript (its location, date, scribe, supplements, and so on) should also be provided. Finally, since the critical text and apparatus comes from a database, it seems scientifically superior to give the user the tools to allow them to evaluate editorial decisions, namely the record of the decisions and the stemmatological situation at each place of variation.

Thus, the future critical edition will comprise a number of things which have been partially available in a number of places. It seems a formidable task to seek to achieve this. But the problem is not what it seems to be, for the web-based critical edition has one great advantage. It can create for itself many of these tools simply by linking to other websites. For example, editors can add a lexicon to their edition by linking it to the Perseus website. With regard to manuscript images, it is possible to make a link between a manuscript transcription and a website containing images (for example, *Codices Electronici Sangallenses*), so that there is no duplication of effort but instead a fusion of information. In the same way, electronic catalogue information can be accessed in order to provide information about a manuscript. In effect, the edition will continue in some ways to be a separate entity, created by an editor or an editorial team, but in some ways it will become a tool which will allow anyone interested in the witnesses and textual history of a particular writing to find their way through published material relating to it. We are on the verge of a remarkable revolution in philology, namely the mass digitisation of primary sources. These digitisation projects are already becoming entities with the ability to draw in scholarly description and comment. As a result, digitised resources and critical editions will be independent entities and yet each essential to the other. Some of these concepts are becoming a reality in New Testament studies through the Virtual Manuscript Room, which is currently being developed. On the face of it, this tool is a resource for many kinds of information about manuscripts, including images, physical descriptions, transcriptions and bibliography. In reality, it is not hard to imagine it becoming the hub for the other tools which have been described.

Much could also be written about the technical aspects of a critical edition, but rather than dealing with such matters, this study will conclude by considering one particular kind of edition which the electronic medium can, and indeed should, change profoundly.

The study of the relationship between the Gospels has a long and venerable history, and since antiquity their readers have sought for ways of holding the different forms of their accounts in their minds at once. The *Diatessaron* did so by a cut and paste process which fused them together. The Eusebian Apparatus did so by a simple reference system which one might say placed any parallel passage within two mouse clicks of the text one was reading. The modern Synopsis even does away with the mouse clicks by placing the Gospels in parallel columns. It has proved one of the most successful tools in modern biblical scholarship. In one respect, however, it has become a master and not a slave. This is the consequence of the way in which it requires the user to treat the critical text it contains as a genuine statement of the textual relationships between the Gospels available in the period of composition. This is easily shown to be impossible since, unless one claims that Matthew and Luke shared the same copy of Mark, each of them will have had access to a copy which to a greater or lesser (but certainly unknown) extent differed from the other. There is not much to be done about this so far as our knowledge of first-century copies of the Gospels is concerned, but we can at least replicate the uncertain situation of Gospel relationships in a pre-print world.

One can consider the Synopsis as consisting of two elements. The first is the equivalent of the Eusebian Apparatus, the framework or structure which states which passage is related to which other passage or passages. The second is the textual content of each passage. Any print edition is fixed in respect of both. The electronic edition has the capacity to make use of the two separately and flexibly. Generally speaking, the first element, the framework, could remain rigid. However, there will be places where the text of a particular witness will create parallels not available in others. These include the insertion of the spear thrust at the crucifixion in Matt. 27:49, creating an opportunity for synoptic comparison not available in other witnesses. So too does the appearance of other phrases and sentences in some manuscripts and not in others. It is thus important for the user to have control over the framework, so as to be able to determine

which passages to treat as parallels. The second is the more important variable, for here one can substitute a printed text with the text of any manuscript. Indeed one could compare a manuscript with its own text in the other parallels, or with the text of a different manuscript or manuscripts.¹⁶ Thus, the parameters of the electronic apparatus respond to the critical enquiries of the user, who in fact also has a more active role in creating it, and simulate the far more textually interactive world of early Christianity, in which each text existed in a number of documents, each of which was unique.

The computer is not a substitute for critical thinking. Housman might suggest that a dog will catch more fleas than a machine, and the analogy is helpful—so far as it goes. But if a dog was that good at finding its fleas, its owner would not need to use a machine (a comb) to groom it. In any case, the triad we are discussing is not dog, machine and flea but critic, computer and variant reading, and any comparison between the pairs dog-flea and critic-variant is purely rhetorical. If we may rid ourselves of this distinction, the critic is using a number of critical tools to understand the variants and to reconstruct the development of the text. The computer is a means of doing that much more effectively and, having done it, to present the results to the public in a useful manner.

¹⁶ Precisely the same opportunities are presented for the study of Old Testament citations in the New, especially in those manuscripts which are copies of the entire Greek Bible.

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NIGHT AND DAY.
A PROPOS ACTS 20:7

Johannes Tromp

In Acts 20:7 the following statement is read:

ἐν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων συνηγμένων ἡμῶν κλάσαι ἄρτον, ὁ Παῦλος διελέγετο αὐτοῖς μέλλων ἐξιέναι τῇ ἐπαύριον, παρέτεινεν τε τὸν λόγον μέχρι μεσονυκτίου.

At first sight, the most natural translation of this sentence would run something like this:

On the first day of the week, when we had gathered for mealtime, Paul was speaking to them; since he wanted to depart the next day, he extended his speech into the middle of the night.

The World English Bible offers a translation similar to this, but other current versions vary considerably, especially in their rendering of the first phrase, “on the first day of the week.”¹ In the Good News Bible, for instance, this phrase is rendered as: “on Saturday evening”; in a footnote “Sunday” is given as an alternative for “Saturday.”² Obviously, the translators of the Good News Bible were not uncertain with regard to the question which day of the week was the first: there is no doubt that they acknowledged that the last day of the week was Sabbath, and that the first day was our Sunday. The question reflected by the alternative translations offered, is where the borderline between one day and another was drawn: at sunset or at sunrise.³

In the commentaries on Luke and Acts, this question is much debated. A distinction that is recurrently made in them, is that between the Jewish and the Roman calculation of days.⁴ It is commonly assumed that in the Roman calendrical system, a day was counted to

¹ <http://www.biblija.net>.

² Cf. B.M. Newman/E.A. Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, London 1972, pp. 383-384: “On Saturday evening.”

³ This must also be the background of the obscure footnote in the Contemporary English Version; there, the phrase under discussion is translated as “on the first day,” but the footnote adds: “Since the Jewish day began at sunset, the meeting would have begun in the evening,” implying, probably, the preceding evening, the eve.

⁴ E.J. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World*, London ²1980, pp. 13-14.

begin at sunrise and end at the following sunrise, whereas the Jews would count from sunset to sunset.⁵ The author of Acts, familiar with both calculations, is then often supposed to have used both.⁶

The present author finds this hard to accept. It should probably be agreed with S.R. Llewellyn that the terms "midnight" and "the following day" in Acts 20:7 must not be over-interpreted and be taken as exact calendrical indications.⁷ Apart from that, it is the aim of this contribution to investigate if it is really true that Jews in the first century considered a day to begin at night, as is often claimed. It will be argued that they, just as anyone else,⁸ considered a day to last from sunrise to sunset.

1. *Night and Day*

The lives of many people today, including for instance scholars, are ruled by schedules. To them, it is a common affair to measure time with great exactitude: a meeting is set to last for an hour; there will be a coffee break at 11 am; appointments are made for Tuesday next week; the deadline for an article is next October; retirement is required at 65.

It should be noted that this is an abstract way of dividing time, and that it hardly ever corresponds to reality. It is not just that meetings run late, deadlines are not met and retirements may occur at unexpected moments. Much more importantly, real life time is

⁵ See, e.g., N.A. Barack, *A History of the Sabbath*, New York 1965, pp. 23-27; R. Staats, "Die Sonntagnachtgottesdienste der christlichen Frühzeit," *ZNW* 66 (1975), pp. 242-263; M.D. Herr, "The Calendar," in S. Safran/M. Stern, *The Jewish People in the First Century* 2, Assen/Amsterdam 1976, pp. 834-864, esp. 861-862; R. Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* 2, Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986, pp. 190-191. In contrast, G. Brin, *The Concept of Time in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Leiden 2001, chapter eleven: "Day and Daytime: Their Divisions and Order," strongly argues for the view that the Old Testament literature bears witness to the opinion that the day begins at sunrise.

⁶ E.g., W. Rordorf, *Der Sonntag. Geschichte des Ruhe- und Gottesdiensttages im ältesten Christentum*, Zürich 1962, pp. 198-199. With regard to Acts 20:7, most commentators choose not to decide; among the commentaries consulted by me, those who are certain that Saturday evening is intended seem to be in the minority; see, e.g., J. Taylor, *Les Actes des deux apôtres* 6, Paris 1996, pp. 86-88. See also S. Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday. A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity*, Rome 1977, pp. 101-107.

⁷ S.R. Llewellyn, "The Use of Sunday for Meetings of Believers in the New Testament," *NovT* 43 (2001), pp. 205-223, esp. 219.

⁸ Bickerman, *Chronology*, p. 13.

experienced by people in an entirely different way.⁹ We may note down in our schedules what we please, but what really counts is that we rise up in the morning, do our business, hopefully relax a bit in the evening, and end the day with going to sleep. By the end of the day, we are happy if we have done what we had planned to do; but if we have not succeeded in that, we console ourselves by the knowledge that tomorrow, there will be another day. And tomorrow, we shall do what yesterday we have left undone. I believe this to be true in our own lives, in which tasks and chores are manifold and complicated. It is also true in times and societies that were, perhaps in our view only, much simpler.

For most people today, and perhaps even more so in antiquity, time is experienced in three phases: past, present, and future; more concretely: yesterday, now, and tomorrow. But tomorrow does not begin when today has ended: in between, there is the night.

The dark hours are a time of rest. Schematically speaking, people work during day-time, and are asleep at night. The biblical and related literature contain ample evidence to show that breaches of this natural order were looked upon with suspicion: to sleep during day-time leads to ruin (Prov. 6:9-11; 23:21; 24:30-34; Sir. 24:30-34), and nightly doings are inherently immoral (Job 24:14; 34:22; Sir. 23:18; John 3:20; 1 Thess. 5:7).¹⁰ According to some sources, the fact that

⁹ In contrast to the title of this contribution and this section, the common phrase is of course "day and night," in modern languages as much as in biblical literature. The American songwriter Cole Porter (1891-1964) reversed the order for his famous song *Night and Day* (1934), thus turning the phrase from an everyday expression (meaning "always"), into an unexpected one. In the context of the song as a whole, the reversed order may cause the phrase to have some erotic overtones, but it still means "always" (as is shown by the recurring lines "Day and night, night and day" and "Night and day, day and night"). This analogy, anachronistic though it may be, explains why I am not convinced by de Vaux's argument that the exceptional expression "night and day" in assumedly later layers of the Old Testament bears witness to a different notion of the night's calendrical position than the usual one. In whatever order the day and the night are mentioned, together they mean "always," "continuously." It should be granted that in specifically liturgical contexts, calendrical issues are of greater importance than in everyday life; see R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel. Its Life and Institutions*, repr. of the 1961 translation from the French, Grand Rapids/Livonia 1997, p. 181; cf. S. Talmon, "The Calendar of the Covenanters of the Judean Desert," in: *id.*, *The World of Qumran from Within*, Jerusalem/Leiden 1989, pp. 147-185 (orig. 1958), esp. 174-183.

¹⁰ If the early Christian communities were in the habit of carrying their gatherings on through the night as described in Acts 20, it is no surprise that others had misgivings about it; see, e.g., Tertullian, *Apologeticus* 8-9; Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 9; cf. H. Conzelmann, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, Tübingen ²1972, p. 125; W. Schmithals, *Die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas*, Zürich 1982, p. 185; and E. Bickermann, "Ritualmord und Eselskult. Ein Beitrag zur Ge-

some are people having banquets at day-time is a clear reversal of the natural order, and a certain sign of the end of time (*As. Mos.* 7).

Dawn and dusk are border areas that appear to be of some concern in the mishnaic literature. Dawn is the period (much shorter in Palestine than, e.g., in the Netherlands or other parts of the world on the 52nd degree),¹¹ in which the early bustle of crows and roosters awakens people and makes them rise from their beds (women first, presumably; cf. *Prov.* 31:15). There is not much light yet—just enough to distinguish between blue and white, or, a bit later still, between blue and green (*m. Ber.* 1:2; cf. *m. Yoma* 3:1; compare also *Ruth* 3:14).

Dusk is the time in which some oil lamps are lit, and people retire into their houses to have their evening meal. After meal, no more serious activities are undertaken—it is simply too dark for that. In our own age, we are able to artificially, and immeasurably, extend the day by turning on electric lights; in contrast, the oil-lamps that were available in antiquity were probably hardly sufficient to illuminate the food that people were consuming.¹² So stories were told, perhaps some songs were sung, but soon one laid oneself to rest.¹³ For most people in antiquity it would be most unnatural to say that another day begins when the present one has ended: first comes the night, the welcome hours of rest and sleep.¹⁴

schichte antiker Publizistik," in: *id.*, *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* 2, Leiden 1980 (orig. 1927), pp. 225-255.

¹¹ It must be said that the briefness of dawn is greatly exaggerated by Staats, "Die Sonntagnachtgottesdienste," p. 243: "Dem Orient ist der allmähliche Übergang von Nacht zu Tag nicht vertraut."

¹² Contrast the remark in *Acts* 20:8, stating that there "many lamps" were burning during Paul's speech, an apparently exceptional situation. Taylor, *Les Actes*, p. 88, suggests that the presence of many lamps should be taken as an indication for the fact that the meeting took place on Saturday, but this seems far-fetched.

¹³ G. Dalman, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina* 1. *Jahreslauf und Tageslauf*, Gütersloh 1928, pp. 594-642: "Der Tageslauf"; Dalman relates that the evening's relaxation could last until midnight; perhaps the festivities as observed by him were less exuberant on a daily basis, when there was no highly interested anthropologist present. For the evening's *sōd*, see also L. Köhler, *Der hebräische Mensch. Eine Skizze*, Tübingen 1953, pp. 89-91; Köhler, by the way, reports that the evening meal was eaten about two hours *before* sunset, and that the remaining two hours of the day were preserved for the socializing that Dalman observed in the dark hours.

¹⁴ Contrast P. Volz, *Die biblischen Altertümer*, Tübingen 1914, p. 441: "Der Tag begann nach alter Nomadenweise am Abend. Wenn mit Sonnenuntergang der Marsch beendet, die Quelle erreicht, das Lager aufgeschlagen war, dann war das Tagewerk beendet und *man begann den neuen Tag mit der Ruhe*" (emphasis added). Volz, however, realized the highly theoretical character of beginning a day at night, as appears on p. 442 n. 1: "Auch in *Joh* 5:24 is 'gestern'

No doubt, the usefulness of the concepts of “yesterday” and “tomorrow” is found in that they underline that, within the continuity of life, days differ from each other. These concepts put “today” into perspective, and make it possible to experience the present as finite, and therefore bearable (cf., by contrast, Deut. 28:67). This is possible only, when there is a real distance between “yesterday” and “tomorrow” on the one hand, and “today” on the other, in other words, when the night as a veritable “non-day” breaks the continuity of time.

Witness to the inestimable importance of the night as “non-day” can especially be borne by people who suffer from insomnia (cf. Job 7:4; 1 Macc. 6:10; 2 Cor. 11:27).¹⁵ Commenting on the misery of his sleepless nights, the Dutch poet Constantijn Huygens (1596-1687) contrasted them with the nights of those who have no such problems. Like them, “I got out of my clothes and into my bed, to be not for a while, and so to speak escape from myself.” However, whenever he tried to go to sleep, “it seemed that my day began.”¹⁶

To live comfortably, it is necessary for humans to regularly be not for a while and to escape from themselves, so to speak. Antiquity knew no 24-hours economy. In theory, the day had twelve hours, of which five were counted at the most: the first, the last, mid-day, and the hours that divided morning and afternoon in half: the third and the ninth hour. The night was the time of “not-day,” of “being not.” Consequently, the day of tomorrow is not today’s evening, but the day that commences at tomorrow’s, the next day’s sunrise.¹⁷

Everywhere in the New Testament, the next day is perceived as beginning in the morning. If something needs to be urgently done, it is done “first thing in the morning,” not in the dark hours of the day that has passed. According to the Gospels, Jesus was buried on

nach der volkstümlichen Ausdrucksweise zu verstehen, nicht etwas so, daß die Leute mit Abends 6 Uhr den neuen Tag berechnet und von der eben vergangenen Mittagstunde (1 Uhr) ‘gestern’ gesagt hätten.”

¹⁵ Cf. Köhler, *Der hebräische Mensch*, p. 88.

¹⁶ “Dan ben ick oock ‘tkleedt uijt en ‘t rust-bedd- in gekropen, / Om wat lang niet te zijn, en als mijn selfs t’ ontloopen: / Maer qualick quam ‘t soo verr: ‘tscheen dat mijn dagh aenquam, / Als ick mij neder leid’ en ‘tslapen ondernam.”; C. Huygens, *Rad van Onrust (Wheel of Agitation)*, ll. 17-20; quoted from <http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/Dutch/Huygens/HUYG64.html>.

¹⁷ Cf. Llewellyn, “The Use of Sunday,” p. 212, commenting on Acts 20:7: “The hours between sunrise and sunset were still *ἑσπέριον/ἄφρον* in the evening or the night before regardless if whether the new calendar day had started at sunset or midnight”; compare the concise statement by F.C. Burkitt, “*ἑσπέρια*,” *JThS* 14 (1913), pp. 538-546: “To-morrow is to-morrow in Hebrew as in English, whether it is reckoned the same day of the week or not” (p. 545).

Friday afternoon—Mark 15:42 says that it was already late (ἥδη ὀψίας γενομένης); this must mean late in the afternoon, since the nightly hours would be excluded for such activity (cf. Deut. 21:23; Josh. 8:29; 10:26-27).¹⁸ Next, it is told that the women respected the Sabbath rest, and brought spices to the grave on the first day of the week, early in the morning. In other words, they went as soon as possible: after Sabbath, but evidently not in the dark hours between Sabbath and Sunday, which are inappropriate hours for visiting a grave (or being out of the house for whatever purpose).¹⁹

The night, then, can be defined as “not-day.” It is a relative concept, with no calendrical value of its own, as is illustrated by the phrase “this very night”: only from the context it appears which night is meant, the last one or the coming one (contrast Jdt. 13:14 with Mark 14:30).²⁰

2. Sabbaths and Meals

For Jews in ancient Palestine, Sabbath was the weekly day of rest. From the second century BCE, it increasingly came to be held as a particularly holy day.²¹ By the first century BCE, it seems to have become habitual for many Jews living outside Palestine, too, to keep the Sabbath.²² On that day no work was to be done, nothing that could seem to be of any practical use (CD X 14-XI 23; *m.Shab.* 7:2; 17:5).²³ Fire (necessary for the preparation of food) was not to be kindled, either. According to *m.Shab.* 2:7, the latest moment on

¹⁸ See, e.g., R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2, Freiburg etc. 1977, pp. 511-512; M.D. Hooker, *The Gospel according to St Mark*, London 1991, p. 380.

¹⁹ Tobit buried the dead in the middle of the night, according to Tob. 2:7, but that, too, was an illegal act, however pious the intentions.

²⁰ It seems to me that it most of all appears from the data collected by Llewellyn, “The Use of Sunday,” pp. 213-219, that people in antiquity had great trouble in dating events when they had taken place at night time. Many people today (including myself) experience similar difficulties.

²¹ H.A. McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue. The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism*, Leiden 1994, pp. 43-60; cf. *ead.*, “New Moon or Sabbath?,” in: T.C. Eskenazi *et al.* (eds), *The Sabbath in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, New York 1991, pp. 12-27.

²² J. Tromp, “Joodse en Griekse identiteit onder Romeinse opperheerschappij,” in: J. Frishman *et al.* (eds), *Godsdienstvrijheid en religieuze identiteit van joden, christenen en moslims: verwachting en realiteit*, Kampen 2000, pp. 44-63, esp. 58-60.

²³ E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ II*, rev. and ed. by G. Vermes *et al.*, Edinburgh 1979, pp. 467-475.

which a lamp could still be lit, was in the dusk of Sabbath Eve, the Friday night preceding Sabbath. This was also the time at which the last preparations for the Sabbath meal could be made (here one could think of placing a cooking pot in a hole in the courtyard).

In *Jewish War* II 119-161, Josephus elaborately described the religious convictions and habits of the Essenes. In this connection, their view on the Sabbath is also mentioned. Josephus states in II 147:

More than other Jews, they make sure that no work is done on the seventh day; not only do they prepare their food on the preceding one, so that no fire needs to be kindled on that day, but they even take care not to replace things or to relieve themselves.

This passage tells as much about "ordinary" Jews as about the Essenes in particular. The Essenes are more meticulous than others. The latter prepare their Sabbath meal on Friday, but apparently are not overly fussy about replacing a pot²⁴ or fulfilling their natural needs. It also appears from this passage, that Josephus considered the Sabbath meal to be enjoyed on the day of Sabbath, not on the eve of Sabbath, since it is said that they prepared the food for Sabbath on the preceding day.²⁵

The Sabbath meal, then, was to be prepared on Friday. This rule makes sense only if that meal was not eaten on the same evening. Supposing that the evening meal was eaten after sunset, the final preparations will not have been made after dusk on *every* day. Therefore, the rule must be understood to intend that on Friday, the meal for Saturday had to be prepared, so that the women in the household could also rest on the Sabbath (cf. Exod. 16:22-26). In other words: three meals were made on Friday (cf. *m.Shab.* 16:2): Sabbath lunch (which was eaten, according to Josephus, *Life* 279, on the sixth hour, or, mid-day); the Sabbath evening meal—and of course the food for Friday night itself.

²⁴ Possibly within the limits of the *erub*; S. Safrai, "Religion in Everyday Life," in: S. Safrai/M. Stern, *The Jewish People in the First Century*, Assen/Amsterdam 1976, pp. 793-833, esp. 805-806.

²⁵ See also *Jub.* 50:9-10; cf. H.J. de Jonge, *Zondag en sabbat. Over het ontstaan van de christelijke zondag*, Leiden 2006, pp. 8-9; cf. *id.*, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper," in: J.W. van Henten/A. Houtepen (eds), *Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition. Papers Read at a NOSTER Conference at Soesterberg. January 4-6, 1999*, Assen 2001, pp. 209-237.

Preparations for the Sabbath were to be made on the preceding day, ערב שבת, "Sabbath Eve," in Greek παρασκευή, "preparation." The eve of Sabbath is not the entire Friday, although the designation can be used as a calendrical term (as in modern Greek, where παρασκευή is the usual designation for Friday). This does not imply that the preparations for Sabbath took the whole day. As the Hebrew word ערב ("evening") suggests, they were made in the late afternoon. This is confirmed by a passage in Josephus' work, where he quotes a decree of emperor Augustus. The Jews of Asia Minor were being discriminated against by the governments of cities in that area, but Augustus ruled that they were no longer to be hindered in living according to their ancestral habits, were allowed to send money to the temple in Jerusalem, and were not to be cited to court "on the Sabbath, or on preparation day (παρασκευή), from the ninth hour on" (*Ant.* XVI 163). From this it cannot be concluded that the Sabbath began on the ninth hour of Friday—not even the strictest rabbinical ruling makes Sabbath begin in the heat of Friday;²⁶ but it is a reasonable assumption that preparations for the Sabbath were begun in the second half of the afternoon.

3. *Sabbath Rest*

The Sabbath casts its shadow on the preceding day: on Friday, the fact that "tomorrow" will be Sabbath has its consequences for the schedule of "today," Friday (cf. Jdt. 8:6).²⁷ The strict rules for Sabbath include that there must be no uncertainty with regard to the beginning of the day. Therefore, the day of Sabbath should not have no border areas, such as Sabbath morning dawn, to which one might be tempted to postpone some final chores. In other words: the preparations for Sabbath need to be completed on Friday, the day of παρασκευή.²⁸

²⁶ Safrai, "Religion in Everyday Life," p. 807, however, affirms that such an opinion is indeed reflected in *b.Pes.* 50b; he can do so only because he assumes the *minhah*-prayer to have been said at 3.30 p.m.—but specific information on the hour of the *minhah*-prayer is lacking in the passage cited.

²⁷ McKay, *Sabbath and Synagogue*, p. 47.

²⁸ Compare here the curious terminology in Luke 23:54: "It was preparation day, and the Sabbath was dawning (ἐπιφώσκειν)." In contrast to Matt. 28:1, ἐπιφώσκειν is here used metaphorically, and must mean something like "to be approaching" (see Burkitt, "ἐπιφώσκειν," p. 546: "ἐπιφώσκειν in Lk. xxiii 54 refers to the 'drawing on' of a conventional period of time, not to an increase of daylight"; cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke* 2, Garden City

In Jewish sources of the Hellenistic age, it is repeatedly explicated that no food may be eaten on Sabbath that was not prepared on the previous day (*Jub.* 2:29; 50:9; CD X 22). In CD X 14-16 it is stated that nobody may work "on the sixth day, from the time that the sun's disk is separated from its gate [*scil.* the gate through which the sun descends; cf. *1 En.* 72:3] by the length of its diameter." The exact meaning of this statement is not entirely clear to me, but the basic point seems clear: from a certain moment on Friday on, no work is to be done anymore. This does not mean that on that particular moment the Sabbath begins. In line 17 the text continues with a list of activities that are prohibited "on the day of Sabbath." This phrase stands in clear contrast to the sixth day, and no doubt designates the *day* of Sabbath, and not the intermediate night, which is, in this connection, irrelevant.²⁹

The following instances should be understood against this background. In Neh. 13:19 it is reported that Nehemiah took measures to prevent trading in Jerusalem on Sabbath:

I ordered that the gates of Jerusalem be closed before Sabbath, and opened again only after Sabbath, and I positioned a number of my men at the gates; there were no goods brought into Jerusalem on Sabbath.³⁰

It might seem that Nehemiah with this measure wished to prevent trading to continue in Jerusalem on Friday night, after the beginning of Sabbath.³¹ But obviously, the gates of the city are closed every night and trade is never conducted in the nightly hours. The point here is that the gates, after having been closed on Friday evening,

1985, p. 1529). In any case, it is certainly not intended to state that the sun was near setting: the women had time to follow Joseph of Arimathea to the grave, walk back home, and then prepare spices and ointments (Luke 23:55-56); see K. Lake/H.J. Cadbury, *The Beginnings of Christianity* 4, London 1933, p. 255; and cf. G. Schneider, *Die Apostelgeschichte* 2, Freiburg etc. 1982, pp. 285-286 n. 17: "[man hat] den Eindruck, daß Lukas zwar den jüdischen Tagesbeginn ... kennt, aber trotzdem die darauffolgenden Abendstunden noch nicht zum neuen Tag rechnet."

²⁹ Differently S. Talmon, "The Calendar of the Covenanters of the Judean Desert," in: *id.*, *The World of Qumran from Within*, Jerusalem/Leiden 1989 (orig. 1958), pp. 147-185, esp. 179-180.

³⁰ Some translations allow themselves considerable freedom, when they render לפני שבת with, e.g., "on the eve of the Sabbath" (Contemporary English Version), or even "at the beginning of every Sabbath" (Good News Bible).

³¹ Cf. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, p. 182, commenting on this passage: "Here the day seems to begin at sunset."

were not opened in the morning of Sabbath, but only in the morning of the day after Sabbath.

To this one may compare a section in Josephus' *Jewish War*, part of an episode concerning the defence of Jerusalem against the Romans. In *War* V 582, Josephus relates that towers were built from where projectiles were fired on the Roman forces. One of these towers was positioned on the place

where one of the priests used to take position and in the afternoon with a trumpet announced the beginning of each seventh day (ἐκάστην ἑβδομάδα εἰσιοῦσαν προεσήμαινε),³² and again its completion towards the evening.

Towards the end of Friday, the trumpet announces the cessation of work (cf. *m.Suk.* 5:5); a day later, the signal is given that the day of rest has ended. Does this imply that on Saturday night, people could resume their labours? It does not, because no work is done at night. On Friday, the trumpet announces that Sabbath is about to begin, and from that moment on, no more work is to be done; on Saturday, it announces that the day of Sabbath has ended, and that therefore *tomorrow* one will work again.

The moment of Friday afternoon makes sense, because it removes the problem that day breaks gradually. By including Friday night's rest into that of Sabbath, the border area between the night and the day on Sabbath itself is secured, precluding that someone might be tempted to travel or do anything useful during dawn on the morning of Sabbath. It is the same as with the gates of Jerusalem: the point is not that they are closed on Friday evening, but that they are not opened on Saturday morning (cf. Lev. 23:32).

Conclusion

No work should be done during the night. There is no "night of rest" in Judaism, because *every* night is intended for rest. "Night" is the name of the hours in which the sun does not shine and people are asleep: it is "not-day."

³² Josephus uses προσημαίνειν meaning "to warn," "to announce beforehand" (*War* I 328; III 351; VI 288; 310), although the word can also be used to express that something is to take place almost immediately (*War* III 86), a spell between the signal and the event is nonetheless assumed (*War* III 91). Only in *War* V 194 is the word used differently.

The inactivity characteristic of the seventh day, in a sense begins in the evening preceding Sabbath. That does not imply, however, that the day of Sabbath itself begins in the evening preceding it, or that the evening following the day of rest would be called the first day of the week. The prescribed rest of Sabbath has its consequences for the day preceding it: παρασκευή. It makes good sense, therefore, to regard the day (especially the later part of the afternoon) preceding Sabbath as more special than other days, and to designate it as Sabbath Eve (ערב שבת): the day *before* Sabbath, but not the day of Sabbath itself. To conclude from this that Jews in Antiquity regarded a day to begin at nightfall is as unlikely as it seems at first sight.

The meal that Paul and his companions are said to have had in Troas (Acts 20:7) is situated by the author of Acts on the first day of the week, that is, in the late afternoon or evening of Sunday.³³

³³ Whether the author of Acts regarded that meal as a specifically Christian convivial meal (see H.J. de Jonge, *Avondmaal en symposium. Oorsprong en eerste ontwikkeling van de vroeg-christelijke samenkomst*, Leiden 2007) has not been the subject of this short note, which I gladly offer to Henk Jan de Jonge as a token of deep appreciation.

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GOSPELS AND COMMUNITIES.
WAS MARK WRITTEN FOR A SUFFERING COMMUNITY?

Christopher Tuckett

The aim of this essay is to seek to say something about "Mark's community," the community from which the writer of the second gospel came and (arguably) for which he wrote his gospel. However, some recent publications have cast serious doubts on the whole enterprise of seeking to identify specific communities lying behind the New Testament gospels. And so, in the first part of this essay, I offer a few remarks on these more general issues, seeking to defend the appropriateness of trying to identify the community to which a writer such as Mark may have belonged, and which he may be seeking to address via his gospel. In the second part of the essay, I will then raise the question of whether, if it is legitimate to think of a "Markan community," that community was a suffering community.

1. Gospels and Communities: Gospels for all Christians?

There has been a steadily growing trend over the last fifty years (or more) to assume as almost axiomatic that the gospels were written in and for specific communities. Further, it has become almost equally axiomatic to assume that a correct understanding of the community situation in which an evangelist was writing is crucial for an appropriate interpretation of the gospel which that evangelist has written. Within the (probably over-schematised) view of the development of gospel criticism, the source criticism of the nineteenth century gave way to the form criticism of the early twentieth century which in turn led on to the redaction criticism which has been so dominant (in various forms) since the mid-twentieth century. In this last phase, attention has been focused on the evangelists and their own contribution to the way in which the story of Jesus was presented. However in more recent years, several have stressed the importance of seeing the evangelists not just as isolated individuals, working alone in monastic cells or whatever. Rather, they have been seen as members of liv-

ing Christian communities. And, as often as not, it is the community situation which, it is argued, may have influenced the present form of the stories.¹ Certainly too the trend to use more insights from the social sciences (a trend which has gathered pace since the 1970s) has led many to stress the importance of the social location of the evangelists in any assessment of their work.² Thus the evangelists are to be seen as members of an individual community, working in that community and (to a certain extent) writing for that community. Many have therefore claimed that, in order to understand an individual gospel, it is necessary to have some awareness of the community situation from which it emerges and to which it is (or may be) addressed. Certainly many have claimed that this has proved fruitful, if not essential, for interpreting Matthew and John, as well as Mark and Luke.³

This basic underlying assumption has however been radically challenged in a recent, influential collection of essays edited by Richard Bauckham and entitled *The Gospels for All Christians. Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*.⁴ Bauckham's own essay, entitled "For whom were the Gospels written?" (pp. 9-49), forms the first in the

¹ This was, of course, the insight of the form of criticism (at least in relation to the smaller units of the tradition), though form criticism tended to work with a less specific idea of individual, separate communities. For the development of the ideas, and in part the scholarly language about *Sitz im Leben*, from older form criticism to more recent discussion of gospel communities, see S. Byrskog, "A Century with the *Sitz im Leben*. From Form-Critical Setting to Gospel Community and Beyond," *ZNW* 98 (2007), pp. 1-27.

² Cf. e.g. John Riches' comments in his *Matthew*, Sheffield 1996, p. 8, on how a book on Matthew today would differ from one written even a few years ago: one important difference would be the stress placed now on the *community* situation of the evangelist.

³ For Matthew, there has been a flood of recent studies on Matthew and his community situation: cf. e.g. J.A. Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism. The Social World of the Matthean Community*, Minneapolis 1990; D. Balch (ed.), *Social History of the Matthean Community*, Minneapolis 1991, as well as other full-length monographs; for John the literature is by now enormous, but cf. the highly influential works of J.L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*, Nashville 1979; R.E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*, New York 1979; for Luke, cf. P. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts. Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology*, Cambridge 1987; for Mark, cf. H.C. Kee, *Community of the New Age. Studies in Mark's Gospel*, London 1977; also the whole discussion initiated by theories about the role of the disciples in the Markan story, e.g. by T.J. Weeden, *Mark: Traditions in Conflict*, Philadelphia 1971; most recently the monographs of B.J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans. The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel*, Leiden 2003; H.N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in its Historical and Social Context*, Leiden 2004.

⁴ R.J. Bauckham (ed.), *The Gospels for All Christians. Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*, Grand Rapids 1998.

collection and it provides the foundation stone for the others that follow. The answer to the question of Bauckham's essay title is effectively the title of the collection as a whole: rather than each gospel being addressed to each evangelist's own community, the gospels were explicitly written for, and intended to be read by, "all Christians." As a result Bauckham argues that all talk of a Markan community, or a Matthean community, should be abandoned. A recent monograph by Dwight Peterson has argued similarly that any search for a Markan community is futile and useless, as has Michael Bird in an article seeking to refine Bauckham's own earlier arguments.⁵ In part, these recent publications are picking up smaller, less developed arguments made by others, notably Tolbert or Beavis on Mark, as well as remarks by others on the other New Testament gospels.⁶

Should one therefore abandon this paper at the outset and say that any attempts to identify features of Mark's community are not worth the effort or are impossible to attain? Bauckham and others have certainly set out a strong challenge to what they perceive as some kind of "consensus" viewpoint among gospel scholarship today. However, I remain convinced that, in a number of important respects, the recent challenges are not fully convincing; certainly a number of the arguments adduced in the debate have been examined and criticised by others (including myself) elsewhere, and there is no point in repeating such counter-arguments here.⁷ I remain convinced that it is still

⁵ D.N. Peterson, *The Origins of Mark. The Markan Community in Current Debate*, Leiden 2000; M.F. Bird, "The Markan Community, Myth or Maze? Bauckham's *Gospel for All Christians* revisited," *JTS* 57 (2006), pp. 474-486.

⁶ See e.g. M.A. Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel. Mark's Words in Literary-Historical Perspective*, Minneapolis 1989, pp. 303-306; M.A. Beavis, *Mark's Audience. The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4.11-12*, Sheffield 1989, pp. 171-173; C. Talbert, *Reading John*, New York 1992; L.T. Johnson, "On Finding the Lukan Community: A cautious cautionary essay," in: P.J. Achtemeier (ed.), *Society of Biblical Literature 1979 Seminar Papers* 1, Missoula 1979, pp. 87-100; D.C. Allison, "Was there a 'Lukan Community'?", *IBS* 10 (1988), pp. 62-70; H. Moxnes, "The Social Context of Luke's Community," *Int* 48 (1994), pp. 379-389; see too H.Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church*, New Haven 1995, p. 102; M. Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*, London 2000, pp. 106-115.

⁷ For critiques (of Bauckham and others), see e.g. P. Esler, "Community and Gospel in Early Christianity: A Response to Richard Bauckham's *Gospels for All Christians*," *SJT* 51 (1998), pp. 235-248 (with a brief rejoinder by Bauckham on pp. 249-253, largely restating his position); J. Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, New York 2000, pp. 25-28; D.C. Sim, "The Gospels for all Christians? A Response to Richard Bauckham," *JSNT* 84 (2001), pp. 3-27; M.M. Mitchell, "Patristic Counter-Evidence to the Claim that 'The Gospels Were Written for All Christians'," *NTS* 51 (2005), pp. 36-79; Incigneri, *Gospel*, pp. 30-34. An earlier draft of the present essay formed

worthwhile and valuable to ask about an evangelist's own community situation, and to posit this as at least the primary context against which the gospel should be interpreted. Whether one should think of a local community as the *only* intended readers of the gospel is perhaps a slightly different question. In some respects, a focus on "readership" alone may be a little narrow. Bauckham focuses his arguments for the most part on just this question, meaning for the most part intended readers (though sometimes sliding somewhat confusingly between intended or "implied" readers and "actual" readers).⁸ I therefore offer here just a few remarks on the broader "hermeneutical" questions and implications arising from this debate about "gospel communities" (and I focus on the arguments of Bauckham, if only because his essay has been so influential and important in generating the current debate).

Bauckham concludes his essay with some "hermeneutical observations," spelling out what he sees as the implications of the arguments and claims made earlier in his essay. He states that "if the gospels do not address those communities (i.e. those of the evangelists) in particular, these communities have no hermeneutical relevance."⁹ Quite what Bauckham means by "hermeneutical" here is not clear. I would however suggest that he seems to be going considerably further than his evidence allows. He himself concedes that the evangelists probably did come from communities (though perhaps from more than one), and that they did have their own particular theological slant to bring to the material.¹⁰ But then they may well have been

the basis of a discussion of the work of Roskam at the meeting of NOSTER in Utrecht, 2002 (at the stage when her work was a doctoral thesis in the making), and contained a more extensive and detailed critique of the theories of Bauckham and others in relation to the possible existence of "gospel communities." In the published version of her thesis, Roskam kindly summarised most of the points from that draft of my paper (see Roskam, *Purpose*, pp. 17-22) and hence the points made there will not be repeated here. The article of Bird (n. 5 above), which appeared subsequently to the writing of that earlier draft, has not led me to want to change any of the points made then.

⁸ Cf. the summary comments in Roskam, *Purpose*, pp. 18-19. Who Mark intended (and/or hoped) his gospel to be read by, and who in fact read it, may not necessarily be identical.

⁹ Bauckham, "For whom were the Gospels written?," p. 44, and repeated on p. 45.

¹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 46. Cf., too Bird, "Markan Community," p. 482: "There is no need to deny that community needs have shaped and interpreted the story in both its transmission and its final form. The point is that community needs have not *wholly* determined its content or comprised its referent" (stress added). But few, if any, would argue that the community situation has "wholly" determined the content of a gospel, or indeed "comprise its referent." (The situation may be slightly different in relation to John, compared with the synoptics.)

influenced in this by their experience within a community (or communities). Recent sociological and anthropological studies have reminded us of the crucial importance of social location, and of community, in shaping and influencing any person's existence and identity.¹¹ Even if Bauckham were right, and the evangelists did intend to address a broader readership, their own community situation may well be highly relevant and significant in shaping and influencing their own theological perspectives. If so, then the (community) situation of the evangelists may well have a very high degree of "hermeneutical relevance."¹² And hence an exclusive focus on the readership question alone may be not the most helpful or the most fruitful one to pose.¹³ For most modern readers of the gospels, the more important hermeneutical issues are more to do with how the texts are to be read responsibly in a way that is sensitive to their historical origins as texts. But then in that context, there may not be a huge difference between an evangelist deeply influenced by his own community situation as affecting the way he writes his gospel, and an evangelist actually addressing that community through his gospel.

Bauckham also argues that the Gospels were probably written as "open texts" not "closed texts," leaving much more scope to their readers to give meaning to the words. "For various late-first-century churches hearing Matthew's gospel in differing situations Jesus' command to love one's enemies would have meant rather different things. I do not think Matthew would have minded at all."¹⁴

Such a general claim is however rather dubious, at least in relation to some traditions. For example, the history of interpretation shows that Jesus' saying about purity in Mark 7:15 can be taken to mean

¹¹ Stressed by Esler, "Community and Gospel in Early Christianity," p. 238, in his critique of Bauckham's work, especially in relation to first century societies.

¹² Bauckham's claim in this respect ("For whom were the Gospels written?," p. 45) seems questionable. He writes: "[An evangelist's] implied readership is not a specific audience, large or small, but an indefinite readership in any or every church of the late first century to which his Gospel might circulate. This, not what one may or may not be able to guess about the evangelist's community, is the hermeneutically relevant fact." But since the interpretation of any text is dependent on knowing who is writing, and what goes to make up his or her identity, i.e. their situation (perhaps in a community), quite as much as on knowing who they are addressing, it is not at all clear that "the hermeneutically relevant fact" (singular!) is solely the correct identification of the audience.

¹³ See above.

¹⁴ Bauckham, "For whom were the Gospels written?," p. 48. For the difference between "open" and "closed" texts he refers to the work of U. Eco.

"rather different things." It is quite clear too that Matthew is more than a little unhappy about some of these things and struggles desperately to exclude them (e.g. any idea that Jesus is radically calling into question the food laws of Leviticus: for Matthew the whole debate of Mark 7:1-23 is about hand washing; cf. Matt. 15:20!) Similarly, the history of interpretation shows that a story such as Mark 2:23-28 can lead to a range of different interpretations with regard to the issue of Jesus and Sabbath law. Again Matthew shows that he would not be happy with some of these: he omits the (potentially very radical) saying in Mark 2:27, and bolsters Jesus' defence of the disciples' action of plucking corn on the Sabbath by adding even further arguments from the law to justify such a breach of Sabbath law (Matt. 12:5-7).

There is a similar situation with the potentially (hermeneutically) "open" saying of the double love command: each evangelist clearly indicates the way in which he wants the tradition to be read: Matthew evidently sees it as implying that all of the commands of the law can be derived from it (cf. Matt. 22:40: all the rest of "the law and the prophets" "hang" on these two commands); Mark takes it as implying that that these two commands are over and above the rest of the law and e.g. the cultic laws are abrogated (cf. Mark 12:33); Luke, on the other hand, evidently sees it as demanding a very practical ethic of help for those in need: for him the following parable of the Good Samaritan is evidently closely related, and for Luke the message of the parable is clear and unambiguous: "go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37).¹⁵ The tradition may supply a series of "open texts." It is the evangelists who at times clearly try to foreclose that "openness."

I am very conscious of the fact that comments made so far in this essay are by way of being rather negative in the sense of being negative critiques of others' arguments. Is there anything that might be said more positively in favour of the (by now "traditional") view that gospels may emerge from very specific social and theological settings and perhaps be intended to address those settings directly? One piece of such evidence might be the very differences between the gospels which redaction criticism has done so much to highlight. The fact remains that our four New Testament gospels give us four very

¹⁵ The meaning of the parable in the earlier tradition may well be rather less clear: cf. the many interpretations of the parable itself (which tend to exclude Luke's v. 37). The issue is covered in virtually every treatment of the parables and in all commentaries on Luke at this point.

different presentations of the life and ministry of Jesus, with different emphases, different aspects, and almost four different Jesuses.¹⁶ Nor is this just a matter of differences between John and the synoptics (where the differences are at their most acute). In relation, say, to the Jewish Law, the Jesus of Matthew and the Jesus of Mark are almost poles apart. Clearly then the evangelists have imposed their own ideas on the material they are re-presenting; and given all that we now appreciate about the integral relationship between individuals and their communities, and the importance of social location for influencing and shaping personal identity, it should be clear that an evangelist's own community is probably of vital importance for understanding the gospels which he has written.

Further, it may be worth noting in passing that, if we ignore the social setting of the evangelists' community situation, we may land up with interpretations of the gospels could be not only positively misleading but also hugely damaging. For example, the polemic against other Jewish groups, which is so prominent in the gospels of Matthew and John, has been very helpfully explained in recent studies by reference to the situation of the Christian communities suffering persecution from their Jewish contemporaries in what were probably real, but distinctive, social situations. If such social locations have "no hermeneutical relevance" for interpreting the gospels, we may find ourselves before too long in a situation where the polemical language is divorced from its original social context, repeated in a quite different social context and taken as absolute statements interpreted at face value. For all of us who live (as we have to) in a post-Holocaust situation, the dangers of such an approach are hopefully all too evident, as well as deeply disturbing.

I turn then to Mark's community situation, having hopefully provided at least some defence for the view that it is may be both legitimate, and desirable, to ask about the situation of the community from which Mark comes and which he may be addressing.

¹⁶ The situation is magnified even more if one takes into account other, non-canonical Christian "gospels."

2. Mark's Community: A Suffering Community?

The whole question of the situation of Mark and his community has been much discussed in contemporary scholarship, and no attempt will be made here to review the secondary literature in any way comprehensively.¹⁷ The question of that situation contains a number of aspects. For example, the possible geographical location has always been an issue (whether Mark is to be located in Rome, in another big urban centre in the Empire, in Palestine, in close proximity geographically to the events of the Jewish War of 66-70 etc.).¹⁸ I leave all these on one side here. Rather, the question I wish to consider here is the more general one of whether Mark emerges from a community that is suffering persecution.

It is often regarded as almost self-evident that Mark's community is suffering persecution. The references to persecution are scattered throughout the gospel (4:17; 8:34-35; 10:29-30; 13:9-13); the emphasis on Jesus as the one who must suffer (cf. the passion predictions etc.); the claim that following Jesus necessarily involves suffering (8:34-38); indeed the structure of the gospel as in some sense "a passion narrative with an extended introduction";¹⁹ all these things serve for many to make the issue all but incontrovertible: Mark's community must have been suffering persecution. This is certainly the view of a wide range of Markan scholars, and this view has been recently defended again—very fully and ably—in the monograph of Nicole Roskam.²⁰ Nevertheless, despite a strong consensus among many scholars, there are I believe still some questions to ask.

¹⁷ For a good survey (up to 1992), see J.R. Donahue, "The Quest for the Community of Mark's Gospel," in: F. Van Segbroeck *et al.* (eds), *The Four Gospels 1992. Festschrift F. Neirynck* 2, Leuven 1992, pp. 817-838, as well as the surveys of previous scholarship in Incigneri, *Gospel*, and Roskam, *Purpose*.

¹⁸ For strong arguments for a setting in Galilee, see Roskam, *Purpose*, pp. 94-113, and her supervisor (and honoree of this volume) H.J. de Jonge, "Joden tegen Marcaanse christenen in Galilea kort na 70," in: J. Frishman *et al.* (eds), *Godsdienstvrijheid en de religieuze identiteit van joden, christenen en moslims*, Kampen 2000, pp. 64-88.

¹⁹ The phrase is that of M. Kähler, originally applied to all the gospels; it is widely accepted that, whatever one may think of the other gospels, it certainly applies to Mark.

²⁰ Roskam, *Purpose*, pp. 27-74. See also e.g. B. van Iersel, "The Gospel according to St Mark—Written for a Persecuted Community?," *NTT* 34 (1980), pp. 15-36; J.R. Donahue, "Windows and Mirrors: The Setting of Mark's Gospel," *CBQ* 57 (1995), pp. 1-26; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, pp. 28-29. Such a view is presumed in countless commentaries as well. For one voice dissenting from this otherwise broad consensus, see e.g. D. Juel, *A Master of Surprise—*

That Mark has an interest in suffering and persecution is I believe undeniable. This is shown by the balance of the material in the gospel, and by the fact that so much in the gospel is focused on the suffering theme (whether of Jesus or of the disciples). Yet there is still the question: does this material in Mark reflect the fact that Mark's community is actually suffering; does Mark's gospel simply reflect and mirror the community's experience? Or could it be that the gospel is intended to *address* the community, to speak *to* it and *at* it, quite as much as for it? Form criticism tended to assume a simple one-on-one positive correlation between a text and the community's experience: if a text said "do this" (or had Jesus doing "this"), then the community was evidently "doing this" too. But texts can function just as much to *address* readers and make them *change* their minds, re-evaluate their positions and *alter* their lifestyles.²¹ Thus, as well as identifying strong redactional interests in a text, we need to ask how those interests are being relayed in and through the text, how they seem to be functioning rhetorically, to see how they might then relate to readers and a possible social setting in any community.

For many who take the trouble to treat the issue at all, the discussion of whether Mark's community was suffering has often focussed on key texts such as the explicit references to persecution in 4:17; 8:34-35; 10:29-30; 13:9-13. Many indeed have argued that these texts may well owe quite a lot to Markan redaction.²² I am not intending to argue the individual cases for that in relation to each text here (though it is by no means implausible). In any case, one can say that, wherever the texts have come from, the fact that Mark has included them in his gospel indicates that he agrees with them enough to include them at all and hence they can appropriately be used to throw light on his interests and concerns. But do these texts suggest that Mark is thereby seeking to provide comfort and exhortation to suffering Christians. I consider each in turn briefly.

Mark Interpreted, Minneapolis 2001, esp. pp. 144-146: my comments parallel, rather than repeat, his arguments (though see also below).

²¹ Cf. my *Q and the History of Early Christianity*, Edinburgh 1996, p. 82, with reference to A. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity*, Philadelphia 1983, p. 13; cf. too B. Holmberg, *Sociology and the New Testament*, Minneapolis 1990, pp. 123-125.

²² Most recently Roskam, *Purpose*.

a. *Mark 4:16-17*

And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble *or persecution* arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

Mark 4:17 is part of the interpretation of the parable of the sower. And indeed it may well be that case that the reference to persecution here, and also the expansion of the corresponding part of the parable itself in v. 6, are due to Mark's redaction.²³ But how does the text function in the gospel?

The parable of the sower is part of the notoriously complex section of 4:1-34, over which much ink has been spilt. It is a relatively long section with three separate parables and a number of extra sayings (e.g. in vv. 21-25). Many have argued that the rest of the section (e.g. vv. 21-25 and the two parables in vv. 26-29 + vv. 30-32) are all basically positive and encouraging, providing assurance that, despite the problems of the present, all will be well in a future time: the tiny mustard seed will become a great shrub, the seed growing secretly will produce a harvest, what is hidden now will be revealed in the future, etc. Indeed I myself would support such an interpretation for these sections of the chapter.²⁴ For some then, this provides the hermeneutical key to the otherwise ambiguous parable of the sower: hence the message of the parable is that, despite problems along the way, the end result is assured.²⁵ So, in relation to v. 17, the message of the parable is that, despite present persecution, a positive outcome is assured.

All this is possible, but (as I have argued elsewhere) it is by no means certain.²⁶ One must ask whether the whole of vv. 1-34 in Mark

²³ The description in v. 6 of the fate of the seed seems to overload the story line and may well be a Markan expansion of an earlier original. See Roskam, *Purpose*, pp. 31-32, with reference to my own earlier "Mark's Concerns in the Parables Chapter (Mark 4,1-34)," *Bib* 69 (1988), pp. 1-26, on pp. 22-23; and J.D. Crossan, "The Seed Parables of Jesus," *JBL* 92 (1973), pp. 244-266, on pp. 246-247. The elements are often taken by others as "secondary" (to an "original" version of the parable), without always attributing the addition to Mark himself.

²⁴ Cf. my "Mark's Concerns," pp. 24-25.

²⁵ Cf. e.g. J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, London 1963, pp. 146-153, who includes all three parables under the rubric of "The Great Assurance."

²⁶ "Mark's Concerns," p. 24.

4 has one and only one point to make.²⁷ If so, one wonders why Mark spent so long making it! Further, the very full details of the possible states of the unsuccessful seeds/soils in the parable of the sower suggests that the emphasis lies as much here as on the glorious outcome for the seed falling on good soil. Hence it is just as likely (and perhaps, given the rhetorical structure of the section as a whole, more convincing as an interpretation) that the parable of the sower for Mark is *not* functioning as all of a piece with the rest of the section. Rather, the emphasis may be as much on the element of warning of the dangers that may arise in the Christian life and to which the community needs to be alerted.

The possibility that the parable may not be functioning to give encouragement to suffering Christians may also be indicated by the story line of the parable (*and* the interpretation) itself. The story is at one level clearly one of final success despite difficulties on the way. But the difficulties on the way (the shallow ground and hot sun, corresponding to persecution) are *not* as such overcome. They are merely superseded by *other* seeds/ground which in the end replace the failed seed. If the message were to be one of encouraging suffering Christians, one might expect a story line where (some) seed is "scorched" by the sun but still nevertheless survives to produce a healthy crop. One might expect generally a story of seeds which struggle in adverse circumstances and win through despite the hostile environment. Yet in Mark 4, it is the scorched seed/plant which *fails*: it "withers away." Indeed all the cases of hostile or dangerous environments lead to the seeds' failure. The seed that in the end produces the great harvest is the seed that falls on "good soil," i.e. (arguably) seed that does *not* experience a hostile environment. Such a story line scarcely encourages those in possible hostile situations to persevere!

The parable and its interpretation for Mark may thus be functioning as a warning *to* Christians, an address *to* others, an appeal to the hearers to change their ways and their outlook, rather than being a message of encouragement that all will in the end turn out for the best. The note about persecution may thus function to alert Christians

²⁷ Cf. e.g. the detailed analysis of H. Räisänen, *The Messianic Secret in Mark's Gospel*, Edinburgh 1991, ch. 4, who argues that some of the complexity of the chapter, especially some of the well-known tensions within the sections in vv. 10-13, 33-34, may arise from the fact that Mark is trying to do more than one thing, and make more than one point, in the section all at the same time.

to the dangers they may yet face, and warning them of the consequences, rather than being a note of encouragement to those already facing such a situation.

b. *Mark 8:34-35*

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it."

The teaching in 8:34-35 may be similar. Again it may well be that much of this material owes a great deal to Mark's redaction.²⁸ Certainly the stress on suffering is Markan through and through. But does this simply reflect a situation where Mark's community is already suffering? If so, what is so striking about the teaching given here is its baldness and its starkness. Surely no Christian already suffering persecution needs to be told that discipleship involves suffering: he or she would know that all too well! What might be more helpful in such a situation would be some explanation for such suffering, e.g. that it is part of a necessary testing or purifying process (cf. 1 Peter), or that this is part of a standard pattern affecting all God's messengers and prophets (cf. Q 6:23). But of that there is nothing in Mark 8. All that is given is the bleak unadorned call to take up one's cross as a non-negotiable part of Christian discipleship. All this might make better sense as an address to Christians who are *not* yet suffering but who need (in Mark's eyes at least) to be alerted to this as (potentially) an integral aspect of Christian discipleship.

This interpretation might be strengthened by reference to the verse at the end of this section, *viz* 8:38. Roskam points out rightly that 8:34 and 8:38 both have Q parallels, and indeed argues cogently that the bringing together of the two sayings into a single context is due to Markan redaction.²⁹ But it may then be significant that Mark 8:38 has only the negative, warning form of the saying: there is here only the threat against those who deny Jesus, or "are 'ashamed of' him (cf. Q 12:9). Mark does not have a parallel to the positive promise in Q

²⁸ So e.g. Roskam, *Purpose*, pp. 36-46, though allowing for some traditional elements in the material.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

12:8, to those who “confess” Jesus. If this section is intended to provide comfort to those who are suffering, it is precisely the positive, encouraging form of the (double) saying (as in Q 12:8) that one might expect.³⁰ And yet Mark has only the negative counterpart and this gives a much more threatening tone to the whole. Thus, rather than providing comfort to those who are suffering, this section may be functioning more as a warning and a threat for those who might not be currently suffering (or who perhaps might be tempted to take an easy route out of a situation of persecution, if such were on offer). Again it seems easiest to interpret this in a context where hearers and readers are *not* suffering but need to be alerted to that possibility and warned about the seriousness of the situation.

c. *Mark 10:29-30*

Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields *with persecutions*—and in the age to come eternal life.

Mark 10:29-30 is not easy to interpret rhetorically. Any clear division of this material into tradition and redaction is difficult. What is striking is however that the reference to persecution comes in the *second* half of the saying (i.e. in v. 30) in the promises of the “rewards” given to those who have given up everything (v. 29). The saying is structured in a two-fold way: those who have suffered loss etc. (v. 29) will regain many times over all they have surrendered (v. 30).³¹ However, the quiet reference to “persecutions” is slipped into v. 30a, not v. 29. It almost reads like a tongue-in-cheek “joke” (except that the subject matter is no laughing matter). The “reward” of the Christian disciples will not be quite such a pleasant experience after all: any “reward” carries a potential sting in the tail.

³⁰ I am not presupposing Mark’s knowledge of, or use of, Q. If such a theory were established, it would make the above argument even stronger. However, I remain convinced that such a theory faces insuperable problems. Nevertheless, the existence of the parallel material in Q can help to highlight for us particular features of the Markan version of the tradition here, without necessarily implying any literary relationship between the two strands of the tradition.

³¹ The difference between gain in this life and gain in the life to come, i.e. the division between v. 30a and v. 30b, is scarcely an integral part of the basic structure of the unit in vv. 29-30 as a whole.

Again: would a community which is already suffering need to be told this? The situation of the addressee is presumably that of the Markan Peter who asks the question in v. 28: they are those who have given up everything to follow Jesus. And Jesus' reply repeats the description of that situation in what is said in v. 29. Verse 30 is then what is promised as something which will be *new* to the followers of Jesus. Thus the structure of the saying suggests that the persecution is something that is *not* yet experienced by those addressed: it is something that is promised—and threatened!—to the followers who think that they have already given up everything.

d. *Mark 13:9-13*

As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Finally what of 13:9-13? The problems of the apocalyptic chapter in Mark 13 are intricate and almost endless. Mark's overall message in the chapter is much disputed and there is no space here to go into details. There are too Q parallels to some of the sayings here and, as Roskam argues, much of the section in vv. 9-13 may owe a lot to Mark's redaction. It is however striking that the verse in this section which stresses the "comfort" side of any persecution situation, *viz* the promise that the Holy Spirit will assist those "handed over" to speak (v. 11), has a close Q parallel (cf. Luke 12:12) and hence may be part of Mark's tradition.³² Mark's concern overall in this chapter is much

³² Again, without making any assumptions about the precise literary relationship between Mark and Q. If Mark is dependent on Q, then the Q parallel constitutes the tradition for Mark. If (as I think more likely) Mark and Q are independent (and Q is not dependent on Mark!), then the existence of the Q parallel indicates at the very least the existence of a common tradition here and hence that Mark has not created the saying *de novo*.

debated.³³ However, according to one line of interpretation, Mark is trying to dampen down any eschatological enthusiasm and any tendency to interpret extra-ordinary events as an indication that the End is imminent or already here. The "sign" that will signal that "all things are about to be accomplished" (v. 4) is *not* the wars etc. of vv. 7-8, not the false messiahs of vv. 5-6, 21-23, nor the persecution of vv. 9-13. "The end is *not yet*" (v. 7). The signs when they come will be unmistakable (cf. vv. 24-27).³⁴ The chapter as a whole may not then be primarily providing comfort for a community facing persecution. Rather, it may be seeking to correct over-enthusiastic interpretation of some persecution or other events (e.g. the fall of Jerusalem) by insisting that the time scale involved may be much longer drawn out that some are prepared to envisage. What may be the most significant elements in the small section in vv. 9-13 from a redactional point of view may be the reference in v. 10 to the fact that the gospel must first be preached to all the nations, and the note about the importance of "patience" in v. 13. Certainly these are most likely to be Mark's own contribution to the earlier traditions he is using here.³⁵ But if so, the stress is more on the extended nature of any time scale and hence an insistence that any persecution is on-going and no isolated "flash in the pan" which will not last for long.

Many of the events described in much of the early part of the chapter are past or present for the author, even though they are presented as future from the point of view of the ostensible speaker, Jesus. It is often regarded as crucial for interpreting an "apocalyptic" text such as Mark 13 to decide where the description changes from what is past and present for the author (here Mark) to future. But equally significant for our present purposes may be to try to decide what is past for Mark and what is present! That some persecution has

³³ Cf. e.g. the competing interpretations of M.D. Hooker, *The Gospel according to St Mark*, London 1991, pp. 297-303 (Mark is trying to dampen down too much eschatological enthusiasm, perhaps in the light of recent events), and P.J. Achtemeier, *Mark*, Philadelphia 1986, pp. 114-124 (Mark wants to arouse [possibly fading] eschatological expectation of the imminent End).

³⁴ Cf. e.g. Hooker. I am fully aware that other parts of Mark 13, especially the final parable (vv. 33-37) and the concluding exhortation (v. 37), can suggest a very different interpretation of the chapter as a whole.

³⁵ Cf. e.g. Roskam, *Purpose*, p. 71. Roskam also provides (pp. 55-72) a very full discussion of the rest of this small section in Mark and the relationship of the material here to similar passages elsewhere (e.g. in Q).

taken place in the experience of Mark's readers seems undeniable but whether it has been experienced directly is not so clear. Also, whether any of this is on-going in Mark's present is not clear. It seems just as plausible to interpret the section as implying that the *on-going* nature of the persecution is something the hearers much prepare for, a fact which implies perhaps that some in the community are not prepared for such a message, and this in turn suggests that persecution as such is not necessarily the current experience of the community.

In addition to these points about texts which relate directly to persecution, Juel has referred to other features in the Markan story which suggest that the pressing concerns (for Mark) about the situation of his readers are not necessarily those of persecution. Thus the disciples in Mark debate, and are instructed by the Markan Jesus (at some length!), about power, authority and the right use of power (cf. 9:33-37; 10:35-45). The problems which the Markan Jesus warns about in Mark 13 include not only persecution, but also family disintegration (13:12), false claimants to leadership and false prophets (13:6, 21-22).³⁶ To this one could also add that the dangers faced by the seed in Mark 4 have as much to do with riches and money as they have to do with persecution. Rather than suggesting a picture of Mark's readers as an isolated, persecuted and socially marginalized group within a hostile wider society, Mark's gospel seems rather to presuppose a situation of, if not affluence, at least perhaps comfortably settled existence with the exercise of authority roles quite as much an issue of concern.

Conclusion

I have sought to argue that the references to persecution in Mark make rather better sense if directed to a situation where the readers and hearers are *not* currently experiencing persecution or suffering. Rather, these sections may be speaking *at* the audience rather than for them, seeking to alert them to what may or will come and stressing the seriousness of the implications.

Such a view of Mark makes the gospel more of a polemical document than is often assumed. That Mark is something of a "polemical"

³⁶ Juel, *Master of Surprise*, p. 145.

text is of course not a complete novelty within Markan scholarship. This general view was strongly advocated by a number of scholars associated with Norman Perrin in Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s, notably by Weeden, Kelber and others. Such a theory was however particularly developed in relation to the role of the disciples in Mark: Mark was seen as a polemical text, directed against wrong views in the community; these views which Mark wished to correct were held by "opponents" of Mark within the Markan community, and these opponents in Mark's day were represented by the disciples in Mark's story. Weeden even went so far as to call these opponents "heretics."³⁷

Enough has surely been written since the early 1970s about the disciples in Mark to show that such a theory is scarcely defensible in the extreme form as put forward by, say, Weeden.³⁸ The disciples are not vilified completely in Mark, and any talk of "heresy" at this stage in Christian history is probably dangerously anachronistic.

Nevertheless, there may be a danger of "throwing the baby out with the bath water."³⁹ The fact that the disciples (almost certainly) do not represent a group of opponents or heretics does not necessarily mean that Mark does not want to address his readers, to speak *to* them as much as for them, and to alert them to aspect of Christian discipleship about which he thinks they may need some teaching, possibly even "correction" (though that may be too strong). Indeed it may be here that the written-ness of Mark's text is relevant. Writing in the ancient world was expensive and time-consuming. It is thus perhaps inherently more plausible to think of Mark as going to the trouble and expense of writing and producing a gospel if he had something new he wanted to say *to* his readers and to seek to get them to change their minds, at least a little. If all Mark were doing were accepting the status quo and reflecting his community's situa-

³⁷ Weeden, *Mark—Traditions in Conflict*.

³⁸ Cf. the well known critiques of those such as R.C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," *JR* 57 (1977), pp. 386-405; E. Best, "The Role of the Disciples in Mark," *NTS* 23 (1977), pp. 377-401, as well as many others.

³⁹ See my "The Disciples and the Messianic Secret in Mark," in: I. Dunderberg *et al.* (eds), *Fair Play. Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity. Essays in Honour of Heikki Räisänen*, Leiden 2002, pp. 131-149.

tion, without any sense of seeking to speak to it, the harder it becomes to see why he took the trouble to write in the first place.⁴⁰

It is also at least arguable that the proposal put forward in this paper may not in the end make that much difference, compared with the situation of Mark's readers which is normally proposed: either Mark's readers were already suffering, or Mark thought that suffering was on the horizon: either way, suffering (present, or in the imminent future and threatening) is the real-life historical context in which the gospel is written.⁴¹ In one sense, that is correct: suffering and persecution are precisely the drivers that feed into the gospel. Nevertheless, it may make something of a difference as to how the gospel is actually *read*: is its message one of comfort and consolation? Or does it provide rather more of a challenge and a warning?

The model for Mark's situation as proposed here does not require the extreme form of the reconstruction offered by Weeden, nor is it tied to what are probably unsustainable theories about the role of the disciples in Mark's story. It may however make rather more sense of the present form of the gospel text as we now have it (as well as possibly making it more readily applicable to many modern readers).⁴²

⁴⁰ I am aware that this argument could be reversed, or at least nullified: a desire to speak "to" a community that is suffering by offering explanation, encouragement and hope might be sufficient explanation in general terms for going to the trouble to produce a written text. The argument may then come back to the issue of whether what Mark has actually written in his text makes sense as providing explanation, encouragement or hope. I have tried to argue earlier that it does not.

⁴¹ This was suggested by Roskam in the discussion mentioned earlier (see n. 7 above).

⁴² Juel, *Master of Surprise*, p. 146, also suggests that the situation proposed (by him, and supported by this essay) may make the gospel more applicable, as well as more challenging, to many contemporary readers (though I am fully aware that there is a danger of allowing the contemporary scene to influence one's historical reconstruction!); he refers to "most Christians" who may be "weary of waiting, tempted to believe that the master of the house will never return, increasingly comfortable in a world capable of hiding from the truth, unaware of how easily the authority of the gospel is exchanged for ordinary power." No one has done more to insist on the importance of the rigour of historical critical approaches to the text which, as far as possible, are not influenced by ecclesiastical or religious prejudices on the part of the modern interpreter than the person to which this volume seeks to honour. The present essay is offered here, in grateful thanks for many years of friendship, in the hope that it does not breach those guidelines!

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THE VIOLATORS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. STRUGGLING WITH Q POLEMICS IN Q 16:16-18

Joseph Verheyden

Those amongst us who do not want to side with the uncommitted and still believe that there are good reasons to assign to Q the three sayings in Luke 16:16-18 and their parallel in Matt. 5:18, 32; 11:12-13 face a triple challenge. First they have to reconstruct a text that is transmitted in quite different forms by Luke and by Matthew, and they have to find a place for these sayings in Q, if that is possible at all. They also have to produce an explanation for each of the sayings on the level of Q, and for those who would argue that Q 16:16-18 (all three verses or the first two) already formed some sort of unity in Q there is the additional problem of making sense of the whole. And then they have to account for Luke's and Matthew's redaction. In this essay I will focus on one specific problem, that of the identification of the "violators of the kingdom," but this will give me an opportunity to touch upon the interpretation of Q 16:16-18 as a whole.¹

The precise location of 16:16 in Q is difficult to establish. However, if one keeps to the order in which it appears in Luke, as will be argued here, it might well be the last time that the word βασιλεία, with the qualification "of God," as elsewhere, occurs in the Sayings Source. The word still figures in 17:20-21 (up to three times!), but since these verses do not have a parallel in Matthew, it is far from certain whether they belong to Q at all. *The Critical Edition* puts them in double brackets. The Kingdom is not mentioned in the Parable of the Talents/Pounds, though this parable contains some features echoing "a royal sphere." And the word does most probably not occur either in the concluding section in Q 22:28-30, where Luke must have introduced it, if not from the immediately preceding

¹ For a survey of the discussion and references to secondary literature on Q 16:16-18, see C. Heil, *Lukas und Q. Studien zur lukanischen Redaktion des Spruchevangeliums Q*, Berlin/New York 2003, pp. 118-144. Add J. Schlosser, *Le Règne de Dieu dans les dires de Jésus 2*, Paris 1980, pp. 509-527; and from recent literature, D. Marguerat, "Le règne, Jésus et la Loi (Q 16,16-18)," in: C. Coulot (ed.), *Le Jugement dans l'un et l'autre Testament 2. Mélanges offerts à Jacques Schlosser*, Paris 2004, pp. 113-127; H. Fleddermann, *Q. A Reconstruction and Commentary*, Leuven 2005, pp. 781-792.

context with its reference to the kings of the Gentiles (22:25), then perhaps from some parallel like 12:32 (the Father gives them the Kingdom) or 13:28-29 (the eschatological meal in the Kingdom; cf. 14:16-24, though without identifying the place of gathering with the Kingdom, but see Matt. 22:2).²

The reference to the Kingdom in 16:16 is unique in more than one respect. It is not said that the Kingdom is "coming" or that it "is near" (Q 10:9), nor is it explicitly likened to something the audience knows from daily life as is the case in the Kingdom parables (Q 13:18-19, 20-21). It is not said either that its coming is to be preached by the disciples (again Q 10:9) or that people are residing in it (Q 13:28-29) or entitled to it (Q 6:20). And yet one should also say that all these elements are in some way present in 16:16. The Kingdom is not nearing, it is supposed "to be there" already. Also, the Kingdom is not openly compared to something else, but on the other hand it is now represented very much like any other earthly kingdom, a politico-geographical entity that can be conquered and is an object of strife among factions. The disciples are not mentioned, but on every explanation that has been suggested it is accepted that Christians are implicated in the action that is described. And finally, it is perhaps not about rightfully entering the Kingdom, but it is about trying to get in after all.

But if there may be some truth in these observations, it is a fact that some of the wording used here with regard to the Kingdom is found nowhere else in Q or in the gospels in general, and that the combination of a Kingdom saying with one on the Law and the prophets occurs only here. Scholars have been "shocked" above all by the image of a Kingdom that is said to be vulnerable.³ But the other aspect is certainly no less puzzling.

² On the reconstruction of 22:28-30, see P. Hoffmann *et al.*, *Q 22:28, 30. You Will Judge the Twelve Tribes of Israel*, Leuven 1998, pp. 296-335. Cf. J. Verheyden, "Documenta Q. The Reconstruction of Q 22,28-30," *ETL* 76 (2000), pp. 404-432, esp. 421-424.

³ See, e.g., P. Hoffmann, *Studien zur Theologie der Logienquelle*, Münster 1972, ¹1982, p. 69: "Die Schwierigkeit der Interpretation besteht darin, dass nach allen Deutungen—einmal negativ, das andere Mal positiv—das Reich dem menschlichen Zugriff, einem ἀπράζειν oder βιάζειν ausgesetzt ist. Diese Schwierigkeit wird durch das hyperbolische Verständnis nur verdeckt, nicht beseitigt; denn auch in diesem Fall bleibt der Kern der Aussage, dass sich der Mensch des Reiches bemächtigt."

1. *Reconstruction of Q 16:16*

Let me first briefly state my views with regard to the reconstruction of Q 16:16, its position in Q, and its connexion with vv. 17-18 that follow right after it in Luke.

The Critical Edition reconstructs Q 16:16 as follows:⁴

ὁ ... νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται [[ἕως]] Ἰωάννου
ἀπὸ τότε ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ βιάζεται
καὶ βιάσται ἀρπάζουσιν αὐτήν.

This reconstruction essentially reflects the majority opinion among Q scholars.⁵ The variant μέχρι for ἕως may not be crucial.⁶ In his *Studien* P. Hoffmann had defended the Matthean order and wording of 16:16 for Q, including Matthew's longer ἀπὸ clause in the first half and his phrasing of the second half,⁷ but in *The Critical Edition* he only notes his dissent with regard to the ἀπὸ clause.⁸

Luke has retained the sequence of the two halves of the verse in Q and he is almost identical with Q in the first half but for the disputed ἕως. In the second half, however, it is Matthew who has best preserved the wording of Q, except that he has characteristically substituted τῶν οὐρανῶν for τοῦ θεοῦ, as he has done so often, and that he has reformulated Q's ἀπὸ τότε (so Luke) as a result of his inverting the two halves of the saying. Luke's version of the second half of the

⁴ J.M. Robinson *et al.* (eds), *The Critical Edition of Q. Synopsis including the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mark and Thomas, with English, German, and French Translations of Q and Thomas*, Leuven 2000, pp. 464-467.

⁵ See, e.g., S. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten*, Zürich 1972, pp. 261-262; H. Merklein, *Die Gottesherrschaft als Handlungsprinzip. Untersuchung zur Ethik Jesu*, Würzburg 1978, 1984, p. 87; D. Kosch, *Die Gottesherrschaft im Zeichen des Widerspruchs. Traditions- und redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung von Lk 16,16 // Mt 11,12f bei Jesus, Q und Lukas*, Bern 1985, pp. 15-18; *id.*, *Die eschatologische Tora des Menschensohnes. Untersuchungen zur Rezeption der Stellung Jesu zur Tora in Q*, Freiburg/Göttingen 1989, pp. 427-444; D.R. Catchpole, *The Quest for Q*, Edinburgh 1993, pp. 45-46 and 234; C.M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity. Studies on Q*, Edinburgh 1996, p. 407; Heil, *Lukas und Q*, pp. 124-125; Fleddermann, *Q*, pp. 781-783; H. Klein, *Das Lukasevangelium*, Göttingen 2006, p. 546.

⁶ Of the authors mentioned in the previous note, only Kosch and Fleddermann opt for μέχρι, the latter because ἕως is deemed to be Matthean and led him to write ἀπὸ ... ἕως in v. 12. IQP changed from μέχρι to ἕως.

⁷ With πάντες, ἐπροφήτευσαν and the unusual sequence of the Prophets and the Law. Cf. *Studien*, pp. 52 and 57. Luke would have smoothed out the difficult ἕως Ἰωάννου ἐπροφήτευσαν.

⁸ *The Critical Edition*, p. 465.

saying has a Lukan ring. There is not only the generalising $\pi\alpha\varsigma$, but also $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ which, while not unknown to Q (7:22), occurs only in Luke in connexion with the Kingdom.⁹ It is also quite understandable that Luke avoided $\acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$, as he had done before,¹⁰ since he seems to use this verb only with a positive connotation.¹¹ Matthew on the other hand takes it over from Mark 3:27 in 12:29.30 and substitutes it for Mark's $\alpha\dot{\iota}\rho\epsilon\iota$ in 13:19 (par. Mark 4:15 = Luke 8:12).

In *The Critical Edition* J.M. Robinson notes that the position of the verse remains indeterminate.¹² But elsewhere he has argued that the saying was part of Q 7:24-35 (as in Matthew) and provided "a clarification in terms of successive epochs" of the tension there is between the two halves of 7:28.¹³ Luke 7:29-30 would then be Luke's substitute for eliminating 16:16 from its original context.¹⁴ Against this view J.S. Kloppenborg rightly observes, "if Luke had seen 16:16 in its present Matthean location (in a cluster of sayings about John the Baptist), it is hard to imagine why he would have moved it to its current context."¹⁵ *The Critical Edition* puts Q 16:16 in the Lukan order, after Q 16:13 and before 16:17-18; 17:1-2, and after all this may be the safest move, even if the decision is rated only {C}. Heil in any case does not hesitate to call this the common opinion.¹⁶

⁹ See 4:43; 8:1; cf. also Acts 8:12, and $\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\acute{\iota}\zeta\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\iota$ in Luke 9:6 after $\kappa\eta\rho\upsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\iota\nu$ τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ in v. 2.

¹⁰ See 11:22 $\alpha\dot{\iota}\rho\epsilon\iota$ and $\delta\iota\alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\omega\sigma\iota\nu$ par. Mark 3:27 $\delta\iota\alpha\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\iota$, -αι.

¹¹ Cf. Acts 8:39 (the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip) and as a matter of fact also 23:10 (the soldiers rescue Paul).

¹² *The Critical Edition*, p. 464.

¹³ "The Sequence of Q: The Lament over Jerusalem," in: U. Busse/R. Hoppe (eds), *Von Jesus zum Christus—Christologische Studien. FS Paul Hoffmann*, Berlin/New York 1998, pp. 225-260, esp. 230-231; repr. in: *id.*, *The Sayings Gospel Q. Collected Essays*, ed. by C. Heil and J. Verheyden, Leuven 2005, pp. 559-598, esp. 565. Cf. Heil, *Lukas und Q*, pp. 123-124.

¹⁴ Cf. also S.R. Llewelyn, "The *Traditionsgeschichte* of Matt. 11:12-13, par. Luke 16:16," *NovT* 26 (1994), pp. 330-349, esp. 341; J. Schröter, "Erwägungen zum Gesetzesverständnis in Q anhand von Q 16,16-18," in: C.M. Tuckett (ed.), *The Scriptures in the Gospels*, Leuven 1997, pp. 441-457, esp. 447.

¹⁵ "Nomos and Ethos in Q," in H.D. Betz et al. (eds), *Gospel Origins and Christian Beginnings. FS James M. Robinson*, Sonoma 1990, pp. 35-48, esp. 44. Cf. also Margucrat, "Règne," p. 116: "Pourquoi Luc aurait-il délogé ce verset d'un contexte parfaitement adéquat? Cela ne convient pas à sa réception de la Source, qui notoirement procède par intégration de séquences entières (la fameuse technique lucanienne des blocs), tandis qu'à l'inverse, Matthieu démembre systématiquement les ensembles de Q en vue de les regrouper thématiquement."

¹⁶ "Bei der Frage nach der Position von Q 16,16 neigen die meisten Exegeten zur lukanischen Einordnung" (*Lukas und Q*, p. 121).

Q 16:16 is followed by vv. 17 and 18 in *The Critical Edition*, but the three are apparently treated as separate sayings.¹⁷ That seems to be the easiest solution. The first impression is indeed that Q 16:16, 17, 18 merely forms a loose string of three autonomous sayings which Luke somehow wanted to keep together, whereas Matthew felt free to distribute them over his gospel.¹⁸ As a matter of fact, Matthew's gospel contains some indications that 16:16-17, 18 and 17:1(-2) followed after another in Q. Verse 18 has found a home in 5:32, the second of the two antitheses on adultery, which is not inappropriate as this saying indeed deals with divorce in terms of adultery. In 5:29-30 Matthew further develops the first antithesis on adultery with a rather long passage on scandalising and ending up in Gehenna. It is a doublet of the parallel to Mark 9:43-48 which he will reproduce in the Markan order in 18:8-9 (there with the phrase "entering life," as in Mark). The addition is not really necessary to understand the trust of the antithesis. A variant form of this same motif of causing scandal occurs in Q 17:1(-2), which Matthew in 18:6-7 will combine with the parallel version of the same saying in Mark 9:42. If 16:18 and 17:1-2 followed after another in Q, one can easily understand how Matthew came to insert a saying about "scandalising" in 5:29-30 when relocating Q 16:18 in 5:32. His parallels to Q 16:16, 17 are found in different contexts (11:12-13 and 5:18). It is therefore all the more remarkable that in both instances he combines with it the theme of "being the least in the Kingdom" (cf. 5:19 and 11:11). The second of these he of course already found in Q (7:28). That the motif also shows up in 5:19 might be an indication that Matthew was aware that 5:18 and 11:12-13 were somehow connected in Q.¹⁹ Another variant of the same motif occurs in Matt. 18:6-7, in his

¹⁷ They are given separate titles and there is no variation unit discussing the unity of vv. 16-18 or the relation between them.

¹⁸ Cf. F. Bovon's comment at the end of his analysis of Luke (not Q) 16:16-18: "So wie ich sehe, haben die VV 16-18 kaum eine Beziehung untereinander und auch nicht innerhalb ihres Kontextes": *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, Düsseldorf/Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn 2001, p. 102 n. 81; Marguerat, "Régne," p. 114 n. 3, qualifies this position as a "remarque désabusée." In the same note Bovon also cites a couple of authors who read the three verses, and even the whole of 16:14-18, as a unit (see my comments below).

¹⁹ If Matt. 5:17 can be regarded as a "rewriting" of Q 16:16, as is suggested by Tuckett (Q, p. 407), the link between Q 16:16 and 17 would be demonstrated in an even more stronger way. The two suggestions are not mutually exclusive. However, Tuckett does not want to argue that the remarkable parallel between Matt. 5:18, 19 and 11:11, 12-13 would be an indication that 5:19 was originally already connected with Q 16:17 (Matt. 5:18), as was once suggested by H.

parallel of what is the next saying in Q after 16:16-18.²⁰ It would seem then that all falls in place if Q 16:16, 17, 18 and 17:1(-2) all stem from the same context in Q.

Or should we go one step further yet and ask whether there is not also some evidence that Q meant the three sayings to be read together? The strongest indication for such a conclusion, it would seem, is the mere fact that they are so brutally juxtaposed in Luke. It is the same kind of reasoning as the one outlined above by Kloppenborg for arguing that Luke kept to the order of Q. It is just easier to conclude that Matthew dismantled what looks like a mere list of sayings, or at best a frustratingly elliptic composition, than to explain why Luke would have put together these sayings from different contexts in Q in the way he has done.²¹

2. Interpreting Q 16:16-18

The history of the interpretation of Matt. 11:12-13 has been studied in great detail by P.S. Cameron.²² I want to focus on the Q version,

Schürmann: "Wer daher eines dieser geringsten Gebote auflöst ...". Wo fand Matthäus das Logion Mt 5,19?", *BZ* 4 (1960), pp. 238-250; repr. in: *id.*, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den synoptischen Evangelien*, Düsseldorf 1968, pp. 126-136.

²⁰ Cf. also how the same motif has been worked into the pericope on True Greatness (Matt. 18:1-5 and v. 4).

²¹ Tuckett argues along this line with regard to 16:16: "the relocation can be adequately explained as due to MattR, bringing together sayings about John the Baptist, whereas the converse change is very difficult to explain as due to LkR" (*Q*, p. 407). That 16:16-18 already constituted a unit in Q has been argued for by Schlosser, *Règne*, pp. 509-510. See now also Marguerat, "Règne," p. 117; Fleddermann, *Q*, p. 792: "The three sentences form a original unit, and we can only trace the unit back to the author of Q." Heil is willing to accept this conclusion for 16:16, 17, in line with Kloppenborg, but only as the result of a secondary adaptation and a corrective: "Es kann also gut sein, dass ... Q 16,17 vom Q-Redaktor an Q 16,16 angeschlossen wurde, um eine antinomistische Interpretation dieses Logion auszuschliessen" (*Lukas und Q*, p. 129); cf. Kloppenborg, "Nomos and Ethos," pp. 45-47 and *id.*, *Excavating Q. The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel*, Minneapolis 2000, pp. 152-153. Heil is more sceptical with regard to v. 18: "Q 16,18 war wohl also keine weiterführende Illustration von Q 16,17, sondern ein isolierter Logion in Q, das die prophetische Haltung Jesu zur Ehescheidung tradiert und gleichzeitig adaptiert" (p. 136); but he then nevertheless has to conclude that this is also precisely what Luke has made it to be: "Lukas stellte die beiden in Q nicht mehr lokalisierbaren Logien Q 16,17 und Q 16,18 so zusammen, dass Lk 16,17 durch Lk 16,18 kommentiert wird ... ein konkretes Beispiel für das lukanische Verständnis des νόμος als Symbol eines frommen, asketischen christlichen Ethos" (p. 139).

²² *Violence and Kingdom. The Interpretation of Matthew 11,12*, Frankfurt/Bern/New York 1984.

but the problems to be faced are the same: how are we to understand the verbs βιάζομαι and ἀπράζω and who are the βιασταί?²³ The two issues are obviously interconnected. I begin with the first one. The main problem is that in principle the two verbs can have a positive as well as a negative meaning. This has been widely recognised for βιάζομαι, but it also goes for ἀπράζω. If the verbs are given a negative connotation (the interpretation *in malam partem*) the saying is about how the integrity of the Kingdom is being violated (something like, “the Kingdom is being assaulted by enemies” and “βιασταί are capturing it”). With a positive connotation (*in bonam partem*) it would refer to how the Kingdom is conquering the world (“the Kingdom breaks forth”) or is being besieged by sympathisers urging to get in (“the Kingdom is being stormed by Christians rushing in” and “βιασταί—now all positive—are taking possession of it”).

Theoretically, then, there are four possible readings of Q 16:16b: either both verbs are to be taken negatively, or positively; or, the first one is positive and the other negative, or vice versa. The latter two are a priori quite improbable because the closely related βιάζομαι and βιασταί would then bear different and even contrasting connotations.²⁴ The first two readings do not make the saying a tautology. Q 16:16b may be a case of synthetic parallelism, in which the same is described from two perspectives. Of the two remaining possibilities the positive reading has long become the minority view because βιάζομαι primarily has a negative meaning, and the same is true even more so for ἀπράζω.²⁵ Cameron calls it “the Alexander Schweizer principle,” which he defines as follows: “if the plain meaning of the language is *in malam partem* one should only adopt an *in bonam partem* reading if all else fails.”²⁶ Hence, the saying is most probably to be understood *in malam partem*, and as a matter of fact Luke’s

²³ Apart from Cameron’s book, an older but still often quoted survey of interpretations can be found in G. Schrenk’s article on βιάζομαι, βιαστής in *TWNT* 1 (1933), pp. 608–613. An updated list in Heil, *Lukas und Q*, p. 127.

²⁴ This seems to me a more weighty objection against such a reading than the fact that καὶ would receive an adversative meaning, as Marguerat (“Règne,” p. 119 n. 3) observes against Kosch (*Tora*, p. 438) who argues for this kind of antithetical parallel (first positive, then negative).

²⁵ See the survey in Cameron, *Violence and Kingdom*, pp. 159–173.

²⁶ *Violence and Kingdom*, p. 159. See also Heil, *Lukas und Q*, p. 126.

version might offer some evidence that he indeed did understand the two verbs to be negative.²⁷

Where does this leave us with regard to the identity of the violators? Traditionally these are said to be opponents of the Christian message, and consequently the saying is regarded as spoken by Christians, or indeed by Jesus himself.²⁸ It seems difficult, however, to be more specific. Virtually every possible enemy of the early Christians has been proposed, from the devil to Herod, the Jewish religious authorities, and the Zealots.²⁹ If the saying would refer to opponents of the first Christians, "violating the Kingdom" could mean that these instances or individuals are accused most generally of not complying to the will of God. Some have left it there.³⁰ Others have tried to be more specific and have suggested to identify the βασιλεία with the Christian community as a whole. For Hoffmann the saying reflects the critical situation the (Jerusalem) Christians are in during the Jewish War when the community was effectively being pressed and threatened because it refused to join the revolutionaries:

Indem Q in Mt 11,12 die Gegner der Basileia als Gewalt-Menschen beschreibt, disqualifiziert sie zugleich den zelotischen Versuch als eine Vergewaltigung der Basileia und Usurpation ihres göttlichen Rechts. Die Bindung des Vorwurfs an die Zeit seit Johannes wird bei diesem Verständnis des Logions verständlich, denn dieser Vorwurf wird erst für die Zeit akut, in der die Basileia in jener spezifischen Weise durch Johannes, Jesus und seine Jünger angekündigt wird. Aufgrund der Basileia-Botschaft Jesu wird der zelotische Versuch für Q zum falschen

²⁷ He would have dropped ἀρπάζω because he uses it in Acts with a positive connotation (see above n. 11). In Luke 24:29 and Acts 16:15 he writes παραβιάζομαι, which apparently has a positive meaning ("gently forcing his will upon somebody"), but the fact that in 16:16 Luke keeps to βιάζομαι might indicate that for him the simplex and the composite form of the verb had different connotations.

²⁸ The latter of the two is by far the more common position with regard to v. 16 as a whole, but perhaps one should take care of distinguishing the part on the Baptist from the one on the Kingdom proper. For a dissident view Heil (*Lukas und Q*, p. 125 n. 41) only cites B.H. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law of Moses*, New York/London 1930, p. 207.

²⁹ By way of example, see the list in Heil, *Lukas und Q*, p. 127. Schröter ("Erwägungen," p. 450) proposes to identify the "violators" with all those in Israel who opposed the preaching of the gospel by the Q missionaries.

³⁰ Cf. Tuckett, *Q*, p. 295: "the saying is so general that it is quite unclear who the 'men of violence' (βίασται) are and what is the nature of the 'violence' which they are in some way inflicting on the kingdom. Physical persecution of the Christian supporters *might* be in mind; so too might the death of John the Baptist. But the saying is probably too general for us to be able to build much, if anything, on it."

Weg. Das Bekenntnis zu Jesus schliesst für die Q-Gruppe die Auseinandersetzung mit den Anhängern der Aufstandsbewegung ein. Dadurch aber wird jener Konflikt ausgelöst, den Q als endzeitliche Drangsal begreift.³¹

There are a number of difficulties with this interpretation. First the opponents. Josephus knows and occasionally uses the verbs βιάζομαι and διαρπάζω and the nouns ἄρπαγή and βία in connexion with the rebels.³² As a rule the latter are called λησται by Josephus, but βιασταί would in any case apply better to these people than to the Pharisees or any of the other religious leaders for whom it is not otherwise documented. The precarious political situation might explain the use of a kind of code language. This could be true. However, the allusion to the rebels in Q 16:16b is formulated far more directly, recurring to terminology Josephus would use when describing the Zealots and their politics, than in (possibly) comparable allusions in the Sermon on the Mount (the principle of loving your enemy) or in the third temptation, which are both kept more generally.³³ Moreover, Q does not otherwise shy away from calling its opponents by name. It is the Pharisees that Q is fulminating against in 11:39-52, and they are addressed as such; and maybe it is they who are also in view again in 16:16-18 as will be argued below.

Second the Kingdom. Hoffmann proposes to identify βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ with the Christian community.³⁴ He further argues that the saying is best understood against the background of the apocalyptic-eschatological expectations that nurtured much of the earliest Christian generations' theology. Again, this could be true. However, the vocabulary of 16:16b is very different from that found elsewhere in Q and in other sources when dealing with persecutions (see also Mark 13:9-13 parr.). Q 11:49 and 13:34 speak about certain groups suffering persecution, and if the whole of the community is in view it is addressed directly ("you") but never identified or assimilated with

³¹ See his analysis in *Studien*, pp. 60-79. Citation is from the conclusion on p. 78.

³² See the references in Hoffmann, *Studien*, p. 77 n. 94, who cites *War* II 264-265 as the most relevant instance. Cf. also E. Moore, "βιάζω, ἄρπάζω and Cognates in Josephus," *NTS* 21 (1974-1975), pp. 519-543.

³³ Pace Hoffmann, who cites these passages (and also Q 12:51-53) in this respect (*Studien*, pp. 75 and 78).

³⁴ "Das Reich, die Botschaft und die Boten werden zusammen gesehen. Sein Schicksal ist and das seiner Boten gebunden" (*Studien*, p. 71).

"the Kingdom."³⁵ The persecution itself is described in plain terms using verbs such as ἀποκτείνω and διώκω, not βιάζομαι or βιασταί. Moreover, Q 16:16b would highlight only the negative stage of the scenario and keep silent about the dramatic turnaround that should necessarily follow these "preliminary" events.

Third and perhaps the weightiest objection, the relationship between v. 16b and 16a. The latter obviously does not mean that the Law for some time had prevented adversaries of taking action against the Christians. At best it could mean that for Q, with the Zealots taking over command of the city and the Temple area, it is as if the Law had been put out of order. But against such a reading Hoffmann rightly notes, "die zelotische Bewegung steht nicht mit dem Auftreten des Johannes in einem zeitlichen Zusammenhang."³⁶ The first half of v. 16 indeed constitutes a major difficulty for any attempt at identifying the "violators" with Jewish opponents to the Christian message.

The one alternative left, it would seem, is that the "violators" are (Q) Christians and that the saying voices the opinion of the opponents. This has always remained a minority view. Fifty years ago F.W. Danker proposed to regard Luke 16:16-18 as a relict from the disputes Jesus had with representatives of the religious elite, more specifically with the Pharisees.³⁷ The latter would have objected to the mission of Jesus which they considered to be a frontal attack on the Law, and indeed on God's sovereignty itself. The "violators" would allude to the "sinners" who were invited by Jesus to enter

³⁵ Hoffmann seems to be aware of the difficulty when he goes on observing, "Indem die Gegner die Boten verfolgen und sie in ihrer Tätigkeit behindern, wird dem Reich selbst Gewalt angetan, und indem sie—so ist möglicherweise die besondere Nuance der zweiten Aussage wiederzugeben—'widerrechtlich' der allein den Boten von Gott anvertrauten Sache der Basileia bemächtigen und sie in falscher Weise betreiben, reißen sie wie Räuber das Reich an sich" (*ibid.*). But he also has to acknowledge that this is expressed in v. 16b in a rather more laborious way than in such other sayings where Q is talking about the persecution of the Christians and/or their missionaries ("Im Hintergrund der zweiten schwierigeren Aussage ...").

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

³⁷ "Luke 16,16—An Opposition Logion," *JBL* 77 (1958), pp. 231-243. Danker was not particularly interested in Q. It is briefly mentioned at the end of the article and it is left open whether the sayings really were a part of Q, speculating about possible Q recensions, or rather stemmed from "floating traditions" (p. 242). The essay is a revised version of a paper Danker read at the Annual Meeting of SBL in 1957. The same session heard papers by E.R. Andry on "The Hypothetical Document Q" and by J.L. Jones on "The Reference to John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew."

God's Kingdom, and by extension to all those who were thought to be unworthy because they fail to live according to the Torah in the way prescribed by the Pharisees. Hence in their eyes all these people would resemble violators and plunderers. Against them, and against Jesus himself, they uphold the objection they formulate in v. 16.³⁸

Danker's suggestion was taken up and applied to Q by J. Schlosser who finds in it the "écho de ce que disaient les représentants du judaïsme officiel dans leur réaction au ministère de Jésus."³⁹ This same interpretation is now also supported by D. Marguerat, who notes that a similar view ("une hypothèse analogue") had already been defended by A. Loisy for Luke.⁴⁰

G. Theissen has suggested a variant form of this explanation. Q 16:16 is about Christians stigmatising themselves as "violators."⁴¹ In itself such a procedure is not impossible and it is not unattested in Christian as in other traditions.⁴² It characteristically supposes that one party begins to use as a self-designation a label that others had given them in an attempt to disqualify the group. What was intended as an insult is turned into a title of honour, and this with the purpose of exposing the opponents as irreverent, elitistic, or the like.⁴³

³⁸ Danker summarizes the reasoning of 16:16-18 as follows: "'The kingdom of God has been publicly proclaimed and popularized, with the result that not only the righteous, but everyone, including publicans and sinners, forces his way in'. This is the Pharisees' basic objection. Jesus picks it up. They—the Pharisees—are the ones who justify themselves. They are the ones who complain that the standards of the kingdom have been hopelessly lowered. But, says Jesus, that is not at all the case. Though the universalizing of the kingdom message seems to prejudice legal interests, every precept of the law is safeguarded" ("Luke 16,16," p. 237).

³⁹ *Règne*, p. 522.

⁴⁰ "Règne," p. 121: "l'écho du scandale éveillé ..." Cf. A. Loisy, *Les Evangiles synoptiques*, Ceffonds 1907, p. 673.

⁴¹ "Jünger als Gewalttäter (Mt 11,12f.; Lk 16,16). Der Stürmerspruch als Selbststigmatisierung einer Minorität," *Studia Theologica* 49 (1995), pp. 183-200.

⁴² Theissen refers to M.N. Ebertz, *Das Charisma des Gekreuzigten. Zur Soziologie der Jesusbewegung*, Tübingen 1987, and to H. Mödritzer, *Stigma und Charisma im Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt. Zur Soziologie des Urchristentums*, Freiburg/Göttingen 1994. See now also for two other Q passages, C.J. Gil Arbiol, "Overvaluing the Stigma: An Example of Self-Stigmatisation in the Jesus Movement (Q 14:26-27; 17:33)," *BTB* 34 (2004), pp. 161-166; and for a later period, G. Hartmann, *Selbststigmatisierung und Charisma. Christlicher Heiliger der Spätantike*, Tübingen 2006.

⁴³ Or as Theissen formulates it by way of conclusion, "Der Stürmerspruch greift einen Vorwurf auf (oder antizipiert ihn), der Jesus und seine Anhänger als 'Gewalttäter' gegen den Willen Gottes brandmarkt. Innerhalb des Judentums ist dieser Vorwurf ein Stigmatisierungsversuch. Der Stürmerspruch übernimmt diese Stigmatisierung und wertet sie um. Er sagt: In der

Danker and Theissen thus agree that the saying actually reports historically reliable information on the way those criticising Jesus or his followers would have addressed and tackled them in their disputes, but they disagree on who is speaking in 16:16, Christians using the very words of their opponents, or these opponents themselves. A major problem with this conclusion is the fact that Q or the evangelists nowhere else have the Pharisees or any other critics refer to those sympathising with or believing in Jesus with the kind of imagery that is found in 16:16. They are said to speak of such people as “sinners,” not as “violators” (cf. Mark 2:16 parr.; Q 7:34; Luke 15:2). However, the label would be quite appropriate in Q 16:16 in view of the scene that closes the parable in 14:16-24, with all kinds of people indifferently being called upon and invited to come and fill the master’s house (v. 23).

I therefore suggest to read 16:16 as a piece of Q polemics, one that indeed voices the opinion of the critics, but in the way Q wants to present this for its readers. In other words, Q would have “formulated,” or “fabricated,” in 16:16 a specimen of the sort of criticism it has the opponents (the Pharisees) express against the invitation Jesus extends to all who want to hear his message. The saying does not reflect what these would actually have said. It is an hyperbolical representation of how Q assesses their opposition to the Christian mission. They are pictured as fundamentally ridiculing the kind of scene that is evoked in the parable of 14:16-23. They are presented as people who are absolutely overstating their case. The pointed effect of this reading is that it makes the Pharisees ludicrous.⁴⁴ If taken in this way, it is possible to reach a consistent explanation for both halves of the saying, and maybe indeed also for Q 16:16-18 as a whole.

Q has the Pharisees accuse the Christians of no longer accepting Torah (“the Law and the prophets”) as the very principle of religious

Tat sind jetzt Menschen am Werk, die in den Augen ihrer Gegner gesetzlos handeln-gewalttätig und mit Raub. Aber ihr Handeln ist in Wirklichkeit positiv zu werten. Sie erobern mit Gewalt die Gottesherrschaft. Ihr Stigma ist ihr Charisma, ihr Defizit ihr Vorzug, ihre vermeintliche Gesetzlosigkeit ihre Heilsnahe. ... Mit selbststigmatisierenden Etiketten provoziert sie die geltende Wertordnung und ihre Interpretation” (“Gewalttäter,” p. 200; with reference to similar procedures in Mark 1:17 and Matt. 19:12).

⁴⁴ In discussing this verse Kloppenborg drew my attention to Q 11:14-15, 17-20 where a similar picture is created when the opponents are linking Jesus’ power to perform exorcisms to the quite insignificant Beelzebul.

and ethical life, and hence of "assaulting" the sovereignty or the reign of God ("the Kingdom"). The phrase ἕως (μέχρι) Ἰωάννου followed by ἀπὸ τότε most probably indicates that the Baptist is seen as belonging to the new era he came to announce.⁴⁵ Torah and the message of Jesus are thus presented as mutually exclusive principles. This criticism of the opponents leaves open two possibilities for linking v. 17 (and 18) to v. 16. That these verses somehow stand in tension or even in outright contrast to each other is a given for everyone who tries to read them together—or almost so.⁴⁶ Common opinion has it that vv. 17-18 represent the reply of the Q Christians which is first formulated as a general principle (v. 17) and then illustrated with an example (v. 18).⁴⁷ But there is also another option, in fact the opposite, which is to read 16:17 as part of the criticism of the Pharisees. In v. 16 the Christians are accused of having made obsolete Torah

⁴⁵ See, e.g., Schröter, "Erwägungen," p. 449. Heil, *Lukas und Q*, p. 267: "Das ἀπὸ τότε (Q 16,16b) ist inklusiv zu verstehen, d.h. mit dem Auftreten des Johannes, vor allem mit seiner Predigt, beginnt die Zeit der Erfüllung, und die Herrschaft Gottes bricht an." Luke would have changed this perspective relegating the Baptist to the earlier period. Heil further also refers in this respect to the way Q presents the role and figure of the Baptist in 7:33: "Dafür spricht auch das parallel beschriebene Kommen des Johannes und des Menschensohns in Q 7,33f." (p. 267 n. 49). The mere parallelism of 7:33-34 may not be enough to support this conclusion, and the immediate context in v. 28 seems to contradict it. On the other hand, it should be noted that the often repeated objection that Q systematically distinguishes between the teaching of Jesus and that of the Baptist who does not preach the Kingdom and (only) announces the Coming One (see, e.g., Merkley, *Gottes Herrschaft*, pp. 86-87) has certainly not convinced everyone and has indeed even been interpreted in the opposite way (see most recently, Marguerat, "Règne," p. 119 n. 1: "La dispute ... me paraît oiseuse ... La Source fait du Baptiste l'annonceur du Règne ...; elle place donc nettement Jean du côté de la nouveauté eschatologique"). Also, the objection might just not be appropriate if Q 16:16 is echoing the (mistaken) viewpoint of the Pharisees: it is they who are associating the Baptist with the new era.

⁴⁶ Kloppenborg regards v. 17 as a late correction of the Torah-critical v. 16 (see references above in n. 21). Heil finds in it a touch of sarcasm on the part of Q to which he compares Q 11:42: "Da aber Q sonst im νόμος keinen bestimmenden Faktor des sozialen Lebens sieht, könnte es auch sarkastisch gemeint sein: Dann würde Q 16,17 sich in der Linie von Q 11,42 über eine rein äusserliche Sicht des νόμος lustig machen" (*Lukas und Q*, p. 129). Catchpole, for one, challenges this view: "Q 16:16 should not be interpreted as depreciating the law and the prophets in any way" (*Quest*, p. 237).

⁴⁷ Cf. Kosch, *Gottes Herrschaft*, p. 61. Schröter, "Erwägungen," p. 452: "Q (steht) für eine Richtung innerhalb der frühen Rezeption der Jesusüberlieferung, für die die bleibende Gültigkeit des νόμος ein aktuelles Thema war. ... Dies soll im folgenden durch den Blick auf die Interpretation einer konkreter Regelung, nämlich derjenigen in Q 16,18, in den Blick kommen." Marguerat, "Règne," p. 123: "le collage des deux versets n'a rien d'incongru. La question de la validité de la Torah dans l'ère messianique était largement ouverte au sein du judaïsme du premier siècle. ... Les traditeurs de la Source ont tranché: Jésus le Fils de l'homme valide la Torah. Une application de ce principe est aussitôt énoncée: l'interdit de la séparation conjugale."

obeyance by "pushing" their message about the Kingdom. Against this, the Pharisees proclaim in 16:17 the validity of the Law in terms that do not allow for any modification.⁴⁸ Q 16:16-17 hold together: they express two opposite views, but as seen and formulated by one of the parties only.⁴⁹

For Q this can of course not be the whole picture. It gives the Pharisees a voice, only to counter them. The controversy continues in 16:18, which offers a telling illustration of how Jesus deals with matters of the Law. Q 16:18 can be taken (negatively) as an interpretation that puts the Law out of use, which seems to be the more obvious reading, as many have argued. Or it can be taken (positively) as a more radical way of fulfilling the requirements of the Law than the literalism of the Pharisees would demand.⁵⁰ But on both these readings 16:18 can be regarded above all as a critique of the particular interpretation of the validity of the Law as the Pharisees see it.⁵¹ The same question is dealt with by Mark, and in a similarly polemical way (10:2).⁵² Q seems to have kept the controversy to its bare minimum, without any narrative component whatsoever. It is a matter of confronting principles, and the Christian principle matches that of the opponents in the absoluteness of its claim.⁵³

⁴⁸ Kosch qualifies v. 17 as "defensorisch," which indeed it is, though not on the part of the Christians, as he suggests, but on that of their opponents.

⁴⁹ Hence, criticism or correction there certainly is (so Kloppenborg), and sarcasm as well (Heil), and it is Q that signs responsible for both, but with a very specific and entirely polemical purpose.

⁵⁰ The two alternatives are well described by Tuckett, *Q*, p. 408: "According to some, it represents a radical attack on the written Law of Deut 24:1 itself. According to others, no such attack is intended: being stricter than the Law requires does not constitute a fundamental attack on the Law itself." Tuckett sides with the latter on the basis of the threefold argument that in the former explanation Q would once more have changed the perspective of 16:17 it had just introduced to "correct" the one of v. 16 ("modifying again the strict nomism of the preceding saying"), that Qumran attests to the kind of Torah-critical position as formulated in the second alternative, and that it makes perfect sense and offers "a reasonably coherent and consistent viewpoint" (*ibid.*).

⁵¹ Heil formulates the criticism in terms of "relativising": v. 18 is not an "illustration" of v. 17, "da Q 16,18 ja gerade die konkrete, kasuistische Regelung des jüdischen überbietet und damit relativiert" (*Lukas und Q*, p. 135); but that may be too weak a label for the kind of polemicising Q is after.

⁵² Note the return on the scene of the Pharisees who had not been present anymore since 8:11.

⁵³ Mostly regarded as embarrassing, this conciseness of thought is also valued more positively by some. See Fleddermann, *Q*, p. 792: "With extraordinary density and compression

So in a word, if for Danker 16:16(-17) in a way reports what the Pharisees would have called the Christians, and for Theissen how Christians took pride in this, in the reading proposed here Q 16:16-18 as a whole represents a piece of highly hyperbolic Q polemics.

Is there other evidence that could further substantiate this interpretation? Because Matthew has proceeded so drastically in breaking down Q 16:16-18, there is no doubly attested evidence of what the immediate context of 16:16-18 may have looked like, or how the section was introduced in Q. But maybe some kind of evidence can be found after all. First, Q knows and uses elsewhere the procedure of formulating the position of the adversaries in order to counter it with that of Jesus (or John), and as part of the latter's reply. In 3:7-9 the crowds (so Q and Luke; Matthew has "the Pharisees and the Sadducees") are criticised for unduly appealing to Abraham ("We have Abraham as our father"), a claim that meets with strong rebuke from the Baptist in v. 8 ("But I say to you ..."). It is worth noting that the addressees are not said actually to have spoken out on this: they are warned not to presume to tell such a view to themselves (μὴ δόξητε λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς). It looks as if John reads their thoughts, which is indeed what Luke has him do in 3:15 ("and all men questioned in their hearts concerning John, whether perhaps he were the Christ," which provokes John's answer in v. 16). The same motif occurs again in Q 11:15, 17 (and also in the parallel in Mark 3:22-23), where it is said that some (so Luke; Mark has "the scribes," Matthew "the Pharisees") are criticising Jesus' work as an exorcist. Though they seem to speak openly and not just "in their heart," the scene is presented, both in Q and in Mark, as if Jesus did not hear them (Q 11:17 εἰδὼς δὲ τὰ διανοήματα αὐτῶν, repeated by Luke; Matthew has ἐνθυμήσεις). Again the criticism of the adversaries (11:15) is taken up by Jesus in his reply in vv. 18-20. The important thing is that the motif of having Jesus formulate the position of the adversaries is known to Q and connected with that of Jesus knowing the heart and thoughts of the opponents.⁵⁴

the unit brilliantly summarizes a view of the Law that flows from Q's christology and theology of discipleship."

⁵⁴ The same phenomenon also occurs in triple tradition material. In Mark 2:6-8 Jesus perceives in his spirit what some of the scribes are questioning in their hearts, and he takes up their objection to counter it in 2:10 ("that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins"). Matthew closely follows Mark. In Luke the scribes and Pharisees seem

Second, there is reason to think that Luke may be of help in recovering Q's intent in 16:16-18. Luke may have changed some of the wording of Q in the second half of v. 16, but he has not really changed the meaning of the verse.⁵⁵ As the subject of βιάζεται his πᾶς can well, maybe even must, carry the same depreciatory connotation as Q's βιασταί.⁵⁶ His εὐαγγελίζεται certainly would sound very ironically coming from the Pharisees, but it only adds to the irony that is already in Q having the Pharisees use Christian Kingdom language to formulate their critique, and it is in line with the way Luke presents the Pharisees disputing with Jesus about the coming of the Kingdom in 17:20. It would seem then that Luke in essence has remained true to the spirit of Q 16:16-18, of which he also retained the overall structure. He did not add any antithetic phrase to introduce v. 18, not even the particle δέ (which could be confusing after the one in v. 17), but instead opted for Q's asyndetical contrast.⁵⁷ If so, it is a reasonable assumption that Luke may perhaps also have been true to Q with regard to the context, even if its precise wording can no longer be recovered. In the immediately preceding context in

to be ventilating their objections more openly among each other (5:21), but in v. 22 he nevertheless retains Mark's "Why do you question in your hearts?" In the next verse he keeps to Mark's εὐκοπώτερον in formulating Jesus' objection. He does so again in 18:25 (par. Mark and Matthew) in a context that deals with the question of who is fit to enter the Kingdom (the wealthy are not). And the same word occurs once more in 16:17, now as part of Q (so *The Critical Edition*), to phrase the opinion of the opponents, but as expressed by Jesus, regarding who is allowed to enter the Kingdom, and right after (in Q and in Luke) a saying on "the mammon" that Luke says caused dispute with the Pharisees (16:13, 14-15).

⁵⁵ Pace Boyon, *Lukas*, p. 100, who contrasts the "pessimistic" view of Q to the "optimistic" one of Luke.

⁵⁶ This is true regardless of whether the phrase is translated as "everyone enters the kingdom with force" or as "everyone is pressed to enter it." The latter interpretation has been suggested by, a.o., P.H. Menoud, "Le sens du verbe βιάζεται dans Luc 16,16," in: A. Descamps (ed.), *Mélanges Bibliques. Festschrift B. Rigaux*, Gembloux 1970, pp. 207-212; repr. in: *id.*, *Jésus-Christ et la Foi. Recherches néotestamentaires*, Neuchâtel 1975, pp. 125-130; J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke*, Garden City 1985, pp. 1117-1118; See now also Klein, *Lukasevangelium*, p. 548 n. 25. Marguerat calls it a "proposition ... lénifiante" ("Régne," p. 121 n. 2).

⁵⁷ For other uses of asyndetical (though not contrastive) πᾶς ὁ/ὅς, see Q 6:47 and 12:8 (here after δέ in v. 7). Luke and Matthew have changed the second instance (the first by adding λέγω δέ ὑμῖν, the other by inserting οὖν after πᾶς), but in 6:47 Luke appears to have kept to the text of Q (Matthew again adds οὖν). The case of Q 14:11/18:14 is different because its context in Q is lost. Luke certainly did not object to this type of asyndetic construction. In 18:22 he adds πάντα and drops Mark's (= Matthew) ὑπαγε to write πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις ... In 20:18 the scribes have changed his πᾶς ὁ πεσών into καὶ ὁ πεσών in Matt. 21:[44].

16:13, 14-15 it is said that the Pharisees have heard Jesus speak on money and on serving God (16:13) and that they scoff at him (16:14 ἐξεμυκτήριζον αὐτόν). The accusation is most offensive indeed,⁵⁸ and so is the reaction of the Pharisees. In 23:35, the only other instance where the verb ἐκμυκτηρίζω occurs in the gospels, there follows one of the most crude statements of Jesus' adversaries, which Luke has made even more blasphemous by substituting ὁ χριστὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ ἐκλεκτός for Mark's ὁ χριστὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ (Mark 15:32; Matt. 27:42 βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ). In 16:14-15 it is not expressed how the Pharisees are objecting and what they are saying, but Luke now quite surprisingly and unexpectedly introduces in Jesus' reaction the motif that God knows what is going on in their heart (ὁ δὲ θεὸς γινώσκει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν). Following the pattern that was outlined above, this variant of the motif of "reading the thoughts of the adversaries" would lead one to expect also to hear what they were thinking. It follows in vv. 16-17 as part of Jesus' reply, together with his answer in v. 18. This is not a plea—it is important to emphasize this—simply to win Luke 16:14-15 for Q, let alone to reconstruct the text of Q. But if Q 16:16-18 held together in Q it must somehow have had a context. The reading of 16:13, 14-15, 16-18 that is presented here would at least fit in with a procedure that is also attested elsewhere in Q.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Klein (*Lukasevangelium*, p. 547 n. 20) refers to Diogenes Laertius for whom φιλαργυρία is no less than μητρόπολις πάντων τῶν κακῶν.

⁵⁹ When 16:16-18 is read together with 16:13 (and 14-15) one also might be able to give an explanation for the somewhat strange choice of the example in v. 18. In 16:13 the Pharisees are accused of φιλαργυρία; 16:18 gives the impression that they are implicitly associated with adulterers. The combination of both is not unknown in ancient philosophical texts: see R.A. Piper, "Social Background and Thematic Structure in Luke 16," in: F. Van Segbroeck *et al.* (eds), *The Four Gospels 1992. FS F. Neirynck*, Leuven 1992, pp. 1637-1652, esp. 1659 n. 80.

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PROBLEME UND MÖGLICHKEITEN EINER THEOLOGIE DES NEUEN TESTAMENTS

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Seit der Jahrtausendwende sind so viele Werke mit dem Titel "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" erschienen, dass man fast geneigt ist, von einem neuen Boom dieser literarischen Gattung zu sprechen.¹ Damit einher geht ein neues Nachdenken über die Erwartungen und Anforderungen, die sich an solche Darstellungen richten.² Auffällig ist in diesem Zusammenhang, dass sich gegenüber früheren Diskussionen der Probleme und Möglichkeiten einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments der Sound insofern verschoben hat, als nicht mehr nur die skeptischen und kritischen Stimmen am deutlichsten zu hören sind, sondern vermehrt auch solche Stimmen in den Vordergrund treten, die sich für die Möglichkeit und Notwendigkeit einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments aussprechen. Mit den folgenden Zeilen möchte ich mich an dieser Diskussion beteiligen und Henk Jan de Jonge zu seinem 65. Geburtstag in herzlicher Verbundenheit grüßen.³

1. Probleme

In der Vergangenheit wurden vor allem zwei Argumente benutzt, um die Möglichkeit einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments infrage zu stellen:

¹ Vgl. Ph.F. Esler, *New Testament Theology*, Minneapolis 2005; F. Hahn, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* 1-2, Tübingen 2002; I.H. Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, Downers Grove 2004; F.J. Matera, *New Testament Theology*, Louisville 2007; U. Schnelle, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, Göttingen 2007; F. Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids 2005; F. Vouga, *Une théologie du Nouveau Testament*, Genf 2001; U. Wilckens, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* 1.1-2.1, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2002-2007 (noch nicht abgeschlossen).

² Sie werden gebündelt in dem von C. Breytenbach und J. Frey herausgegebenen Sammelband *Aufgabe und Durchführung einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, Tübingen 2007.

³ Den folgenden Ausführungen liegt eine Vorlesung zugrunde, die ich am 30. Oktober 2007 auf Einladung der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Leipzig gehalten habe. Ich schreibe mit ihnen Überlegungen fort, die ich vor einigen Jahren in "Die Vielfalt der Schrift und die Einheit des Kanons," in: J. Barton/M. Wolter (eds), *Die Einheit der Schrift und die Vielfalt des Kanons. The Unity of Scripture and the Diversity of the Canon*, Berlin/New York 2003, pp. 45-68 formuliert habe.

a. *Die Geschichtlichkeit des Kanons*

Das erste Argument war die Einsicht, dass der Kanon der neutestamentlichen Schriften das Produkt eines historischen Entwicklungsprozesses ist und die endgültige Feststellung seines Umfangs nicht nur relativ spät erfolgte, sondern auch von Zufälligkeiten und aktuellen kirchenpolitischen Faktoren beeinflusst war. Dabei wurde nicht nur der Kompromisscharakter des Kanons erkannt, sondern man wurde sich auch bewusst, dass der Kanonisierungsprozess durchaus auch mit einem anderen Ergebnis hätte enden können. Vor mehr als 100 Jahren hat William Wrede diese Einsicht zusammengefasst:

Keine Schrift des Neuen Testaments ist mit dem Prädikat "kanonisch" geboren. Der Satz: "eine Schrift ist kanonisch" bedeutet zunächst nur: sie ist *nachträglich* von den maßgebenden Faktoren der Kirche des 2. bis 4. Jahrhunderts—vielleicht erst nach allerlei Schwankungen im Urteil—für kanonisch *erklärt* worden. Darüber belehrt die Kanongeschichte hinreichend. Wer also den Begriff des Kanons als feststehend betrachtet, unterwirft sich damit der Autorität der Bischöfe und Theologen jener Jahrhunderte. Wer diese Autorität in anderen Dingen nicht anerkennt—und kein evangelischer Theologe erkennt sie an—, handelt folgerichtig, wenn er sie auch hier in Frage stellt.⁴

Historisch unzutreffend an diesem Urteil ist vor allem, dass die Kanonisierung des Neuen Testaments nicht als ein langfristiger Entwicklungsprozess verstanden ist, sondern—was sie mit Sicherheit *nicht* war—als eine mehr oder weniger willkürliche Entscheidung altkirchlicher Bischöfe und Theologen.⁵ Gleichwohl wird sich nicht bestreiten lassen, dass die Kanonizität der neutestamentlichen Schriften und damit ihre Unterscheidung von denjenigen Schriften, die *nicht* im Kanon stehen, nicht eine Eigenschaft ist, die der *Abfassung* der Schriften zuzuschreiben wäre. Diese Eigenschaft ist den neutestamentlichen Schriften vielmehr erst sekundär, nämlich als Bestandteil ihrer Rezeptionsgeschichte zugewachsen. Aus diesem Grund hat es sich seit einigen Jahren auch mit Recht eingebürgert,

⁴ W. Wrede, *Über Aufgabe und Methode der sogenannten neutestamentlichen Theologie* (1897); zitiert nach dem Wiederabdruck in: G. Strecker (ed.), *Das Problem der Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, Darmstadt 1975, pp. 81-154 (Zitat p. 85; Hervorhebungen im Original).

⁵ Vgl. auch J. Schröter, "Die Bedeutung des Kanons für eine Theologie des Neuen Testaments. Konzeptionelle Überlegungen angesichts der gegenwärtigen Diskussion," in: *Id.*, *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament*, Tübingen 2007, pp. 355-377 (Zitat p. 364).

historisch genauer von "kanonisch gewordenen" und "apokryph gewordenen" Schriften zu sprechen.⁶

Für die Frage nach der Möglichkeit einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments führte diese Erkenntnis dazu, dass man den Kanon und die durch ihn gezogenen Grenzen gegenüber den außerkanonischen Schriften des frühen Christentums für bedeutungslos erklärte und dass darum die Literaturgattung "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" in Umsetzung der von William Wrede eingeforderten "geschichtliche(n) Methode"⁷ durch Darstellungen einer "Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums"⁸ oder einer "urchristlichen Religionsgeschichte"⁹ zu ersetzen ist, in die dann auch die außerkanonischen Schriften einzubeziehen sind. Damit sind wir aber schon beim zweiten Gesichtspunkt.

b. *Die theologische Disparatheit des Neuen Testaments*

Das Problem, das der Darstellung einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments von dieser Seite aus bereitet wird, ist von der Kanonproblematik gänzlich unabhängig. Es setzt darüber hinaus sogar die Gegebenheit des Kanons voraus, weil es nur entstehen kann, wenn der Kanon des Neuen Testaments als Referenzrahmen einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments *nicht* zur Disposition gestellt wird, und sei es nur aus pragmatischen Gründen wie bei Georg Strecker.¹⁰ Dieses zweite Argument, das es problematisch macht, von einer "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" zu sprechen, wird aus dem Verweis auf die interne theologische Vielfalt, ja Disparatheit der im Kanon des Neuen Testaments zusammengefassten Schriften gewonnen.

⁶ Meines Wissens geht diese Unterscheidung auf Dieter Lührmann zurück; vgl. D. Lührmann, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien in griechischer und lateinischer Sprache*, Marburg 2000, p. 19: "Der Vorschlag, nicht mehr einfach nach kanonisch und apokryph zu trennen, sondern diese frühen Texte im Kanonisierungsprozeß des 2. Jh.s erst als apokryph bzw. kanonisch geworden zu sehen, kann mehr erbringen als lediglich eine Sprachregelung."

⁷ Vgl. Wrede, *Aufgabe*, p. 124.

⁸ Dies ist der gleichlautende Titel der Bücher von K. Berger (Tübingen/Basel² 1995) und W. Schmithals (Stuttgart u.a. 1994).

⁹ Vgl. dazu jetzt vor allem die Arbeiten von H. Räisänen, *Beyond New Testament Theology*, London 2000; id., *Neutestamentliche Theologie? Eine religionswissenschaftliche Alternative*, Stuttgart 2000, sowie G. Theißen, *Die Religion der ersten Christen*, Gütersloh 2000; zum Problem vgl. J. Schröter, "Religionsgeschichte des Urchristentums statt Theologie des Neuen Testaments?," *BThZ* 16 (1999) pp. 3-20.

¹⁰ G. Strecker, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, hg. v. F.W. Horn, Berlin/New York 1996, p. 3.

Für das Projekt "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" wird daraus in einem großen Teil der Literatur die Folgerung gezogen, dass es unmöglich ist, eine theologische Einheit des Neuen Testaments darzustellen und dass darum—so Rudolf Bultmann—"die theologischen Gedanken der neutest[amentlichen] Schriften ... in ihrer Verschiedenheit je nach den einzelnen Schriften oder Schriftengruppen (darzustellen)" sind.¹¹ Dementsprechend orientieren sich auch alle neueren Gesamtdarstellungen einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments an der Vielfalt der theologischen Entwürfe des Neuen Testaments.

Interessant ist nun aber, in welcher Weise in diesem Zusammenhang von der "Einheit des Neuen Testaments" gesprochen wird. Wir können hier einen Bogen schlagen von einer kurzen Bemerkung Rudolf Bultmanns bis hin zu Ferdinand Hahns monumentaler Darstellung: Bultmann spricht in diesem Zusammenhang von zwei Möglichkeiten einer Darstellung der "theologischen Gedanken der neutest[amentlichen] Schriften": Als erste Möglichkeit gibt es die von Bultmann selbst gewählte Entfaltung der "Verschiedenheit" der neutestamentlichen Schriften und ihrer theologischen Konzepte. Als zweite Möglichkeit nennt Bultmann die Darstellung der neutestamentlichen Theologie "als eine systematisch gegliederte Einheit—gleichsam als eine neutestamentliche Dogmatik."¹²

Bemerkenswert an diesem Zitat ist vor allem, dass Bultmann den Begriff der "Einheit" ganz anders verwendet als er dann später in der Diskussion um die Theologie des Neuen Testaments gebraucht wird: Bei Bultmann bezeichnet er eine *literarische Eigenschaft der Darstellung* der neutestamentlichen Theologie, und zwar die Kohärenz ihres systematischen Aufbaus, insofern er an der Literaturgattung der Dogmatik orientiert ist. Demgegenüber wird in der jüngeren Diskussion um die Theologie des Neuen Testaments von "Einheit" immer als einer *Eigenschaft des Neuen Testaments* gesprochen, die dabei als inhaltliche *Einheitlichkeit* verstanden ist.

Diese beiden Möglichkeiten kehren dann auch in den beiden Bänden von Hahns Darstellung wieder, freilich mit der eben angesprochenen semantischen Umkodierung des Begriffs "Einheit": Im ersten Band werden unter der Überschrift "Die Vielfalt des Neuen Testaments" zunächst die unterschiedlichen theologischen Konzeptionen

¹¹ R. Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, Tübingen 1968, p. 585.

¹² Bultmann, ebd.

des frühen Christentums dargestellt, sofern sie im Neuen Testament erkennbar werden. Demgegenüber liefert Hahn dann im zweiten Band unter der Überschrift "Die Einheit des Neuen Testaments" genau das, was Bultmann "gleichsam als eine neutestamentliche Dogmatik" bezeichnet hatte: eine in ihrem Aufbau an theologischen Loci orientierte Darstellung, die im Wesentlichen damit beschäftigt ist, die Vielfalt der neutestamentlichen Darstellungs- und Sichtweisen zu den einzelnen Sachfragen herauszuarbeiten. Hahn gibt dann in seiner Einleitung zu diesem Band eine Erläuterung dieses Vorhabens: Er nimmt sich vor, "die verschiedenen theologischen Entwürfe des Urchristentums aufeinander zu beziehen und nach deren Einheit zu fragen."¹³ Hierbei erfährt der Begriff "Einheit" einen aufschlussreichen Bedeutungswandel: Anders als Rudolf Bultmann verwendet Ferdinand Hahn "Einheit" ganz offensichtlich nicht mehr als eine *literarische*, sondern als eine *inhaltliche* Kategorie. Während "Einheit" bei Bultmann noch eine Eigenschaft der *Darstellung* war, ist sie bei Hahn zu einer Eigenschaft der *im Neuen Testaments enthaltenen Schriften* geworden. Ob es Hahn mit diesem Vorgehen dann auch gelingt, wie er auf derselben Seite ankündigt, eine "Theologie des Neuen Testaments im strengen und eigentlichen Sinn" vorzulegen, das heißt unter Ernstnehmen des Singulars, muss darum bezweifelt werden. Die konkrete Durchführung zeigt dann auch, dass auch Hahn nicht umhin kommt, zu den einzelnen theologischen Loci immer wieder die Unterschiedlichkeit der im Neuen Testament zugänglichen theologischen Positionen herauszuarbeiten. Mit dem Gegenüber der Untertitel zu den beiden Bänden erweckt Hahn darum eine Erwartung an den zweiten Band seiner Darstellung, die er nicht einhalten kann.

c. Zwei untaugliche Lösungsversuche

Dass die offenkundige theologische Vielfalt und Widersprüchlichkeit der neutestamentlichen Schriften nur dann ein Problem ist, wenn man den Kanon *nicht* in Frage stellt, kann man sich ganz leicht klar machen: Kanonizität ist eine formale Eigenschaft, die den Schriften unabhängig von ihrem Inhalt zugeschrieben wird. Dementsprechend muss eine theologische Widersprüchlichkeit zwischen den einzelnen

¹³ Hahn, *Theologie* 2, p. 2.

Schriften geradezu zwangsläufig mit dem vom Kanon als Kanon ausgehenden Anspruch ihrer Gleichrangigkeit kollidieren, denn z.B. der Römerbrief hat ein und denselben—sc. "kanonischen"—Status wie der Judasbrief.

An dieser Stelle setzen dann auch zwei eng miteinander verwandte Konzepte an, die diese Spannung—gleicher kanonischer Status auf der einen Seite und theologische Widersprüchlichkeit auf der anderen—in den Griff bekommen wollen. Diese beiden Konzepte sind unter den Schlagworten "Kanon im Kanon" und "Mitte der Schrift" bekannt.

1. Das Prinzip "Kanon im Kanon"

Bei diesem Prinzip wird ein doppelter Kanonbegriff eingeführt,¹⁴ denn vom formalen Kanon der 27 Schriften des Neuen Testaments wird ein "Kanon im Kanon" unterschieden: Auf Grund bestimmter theologischer Kriterien hält man manche Schriften für "kanonischer" als andere. Klassisches Beispiel dafür ist Martin Luthers Kriterium "Was Christum prediget und treibet," das ihn zu einer Dreiteilung des neutestamentlichen Kanons geführt hat: In der Mitte befinden sich Johannesevangelium und 1. Johannesbrief, die paulinischen Briefe und der 1. Petrusbrief. An den Rand¹⁵ stellt er Hebräer-, Jakobus- und Judasbrief sowie die Johannesoffenbarung. Die übrigen Schriften stehen irgendwo dazwischen.¹⁶

2. Das Prinzip "Mitte der Schrift"

Demgegenüber kann man von der Größe "Mitte der Schrift" in doppelter Weise Gebrauch machen: Man benutzt den Begriff entweder als eine Metapher, die einen imaginären Raum konstruiert, in dem es einen Mittelpunkt gibt. Die Positionen aller anderen Punkte in diesem Raum werden dann durch ihr Verhältnis zu diesem Mittelpunkt, d.h. als relative Nähe oder Ferne zu ihm, bestimmt.¹⁷

¹⁴ Vgl. I. Lönning, *Kanon im Kanon*, Oslo/München 1972.

¹⁵ Und zwar im eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes: Die genannten Schriften werden in seiner Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments aus der Zählung herausgenommen und ans Ende gestellt; vgl. O. Albrecht et al. (eds), *Martin Luthers Werke. Die Deutsche Bibel* 6, Weimar 1929, pp. 12-13; s. auch Bd. 7, Weimar 1931, p. 384.

¹⁶ S. auch E. Käsemann: "die Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen ... als Kanon im Kanon" ("Zusammenfassung," in: id. [ed.], *Das Neue Testament als Kanon. Dokumentation und kritische Analyse zur gegenwärtigen Diskussion*, Göttingen 1970, p. 405).

¹⁷ Vgl. in diesem Sinne z.B. W. Schrage, "Die Frage nach der Mitte und dem Kanon im Ka-

Eine andere Verwendungsweise dieser Metapher besteht darin, dass man unter "Mitte der Schrift" so etwas wie einen gemeinsamen Nenner oder eine Schnittmenge versteht. Das Resultat ist dann eine theologische Kurzaussage, in deren Inhalt man so etwas wie einheitsstiftende Sachaussage sieht, die allen Schriften des neutestamentlichen Kanons in und trotz ihrer spannungsreichen Vielfalt gemeinsam ist. Ferdinand Hahn z.B. identifiziert als diese Schnittmenge "das Offenbarungshandeln Gottes in Jesus Christus und dessen soteriologische Relevanz."¹⁸

3. Kritik

Das Problem dieser beiden Lösungsversuche ist evident: Es besteht in der Abhängigkeit der Auswahlkriterien von individuellen theologischen Positionen, die von außen an die Texte herangetragen werden. Es ist immer eine durch aktuelle theologische Interessen gesteuerte Lektüre, die darüber entscheidet, welche Schriften zum Kanon im Kanon gerechnet werden und welche nicht, oder die den einzelnen Schriften eine Position in der Nähe oder Ferne zur Mitte zuweist.

Darüber hinaus scheitern beide Konzepte auch an ihrem inneren Selbstwiderspruch: Sie geben zwar vor, mit beiden Füßen auf dem Boden des neutestamentlichen Kanons zu stehen und seine Verbindlichkeit vorauszusetzen, tatsächlich destruieren sie jedoch den Kanon.

Beim Konzept "Kanon im Kanon" und beim kritischen Gebrauch des "Mitte der Schrift"-Modells "(läuft) die eigentliche Grenze des Kanons ... durch den Kanon mitten hindurch,"¹⁹ und damit ist natürlich der Anspruch des Kanons als Kanon, der allen in ihm enthaltenen Schriften ein und denselben Status verleiht, suspendiert.

Umgekehrt werden bei demjenigen Gebrauch des "Mitte der

non des Neuen Testaments in der neueren Diskussion," in: J. Friedrich *et al.* (eds), *Rechtfertigung. Festschrift Ernst Käsemann*, Tübingen/Göttingen 1976, pp. 415-442; bes. 439: Als "Sachmitte des Neuen Testaments" sei "der Christus iustificans oder ... der Christus pro nobis" anzusehen.

¹⁸ Hahn, *Theologie* 2, p. 34. Bei P. Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* 2, Göttingen 1999, pp. 320-321 besteht die "Mitte der Schrift" aus einem längeren, 13 Zeilen umfassenden Text, bei dem es sich jedoch nicht um eine Bestimmung der theologischen Schnittmenge der neutestamentlichen Schriften handelt, sondern um eine Zusammenfassung von Stuhlmachers eigener Theologie.

¹⁹ W.G. Kümmel, "Notwendigkeit und Grenze des neutestamentlichen Kanons," in: Käsemann (ed.), *Das Neue Testament als Kanon*, pp. 62-97 (Zitat p. 96).

Schrift"-Modells, das nach einem gemeinsamen Nenner fragt, der alle neutestamentlichen Schriften miteinander verbindet, die Kanongrenzen nach außen hin eingerissen. Diese Folge wird von den Protagonisten dieses Mitte-der-Schrift-Modells durchweg nicht erkannt. Sie übersehen, dass jede Annahme einer theologischen Sachmitte aller neutestamentlichen Schriften immer *zwei* Bedingungen erfüllen muss: Es muss zum einen die theologische Gemeinsamkeit der neutestamentlichen Schriften *nach innen* auf den Begriff bringen, und es muss zum anderen deren theologische Abgrenzung *nach außen* markieren und plausibel machen, dass die postulierte *Gemeinsamkeit* gleichzeitig auch den *Unterschied* gegenüber den nichtkanonischen Schriften beschreibt. Auch die theologische Identität des Neuen Testaments ist dementsprechend nicht ohne die Bestimmung der theologischen Alterität zu haben. Aus diesem Grunde bleibt jedes der in diesem Zusammenhang für gewöhnlich genannten Kriterien insofern unzureichend, als es eben diese Alterität nicht sichtbar zu machen vermag, die allein die Unterscheidung zwischen der theologischen Einheit der kanonischen Schriften auf der einen Seite und den nichtkanonischen Schriften auf der anderen Seite rechtfertigen könnte. Alle angeblichen neutestamentlichen Basisaussagen, denen die Funktion zugeschrieben wird, in der Vielfalt die Einheit zu identifizieren, kranken an dieser Einseitigkeit: dass sie nämlich nicht zur Abgrenzung nach außen taugen. Es wird sich vielmehr zeigen, dass es überhaupt nur eine einzige theologische Größe gibt, die *beide* Bedingungen erfüllt und sowohl die Einheit des Neuen Testaments nach innen als auch seine Abgrenzung nach außen markiert, und das ist die Kanonizität des Neuen Testaments als solche.

Mit dem letzten Satz sind nun wieder wir an derselben Stelle angelangt wie zu Beginn: Die Einsicht in das kanonische Gewordensein der neutestamentlichen Schriften und die Wahrnehmung ihrer theologischen Disparatheit machen es unmöglich, auf der Ebene der theologischen Intentionen der jeweiligen Autoren dieser Schriften so etwas wie eine "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" "im strengen und eigentlichen Sinn"²⁰ zu konzipieren. "Im strengen und eigentlichen Sinn" heißt hier: den Singular "Theologie" ernstnehmend und nicht nur eine Addition unterschiedlicher theologischer Entwürfe beschreibend, deren Zahl lediglich aus pragmatischen Gründen auf die im

²⁰ Hahn, *Theologie* 2, p. 2.

neutestamentlichen Kanon zusammengefassten Schriften beschränkt bleibt.

d. *Zwei interessante Erklärungen*

Es stellt sich darum die Frage, ob es nicht angemessener gewesen wäre, in der Überschrift statt von "Problemen" von der "Unmöglichkeit einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments" zu sprechen. Auf jeden Fall aber ist es angebracht, an dieser Stelle noch ein Stück grundsätzlicher nach den möglichen kontextuellen Rahmenbedingungen des Bemühens um eine Theologie des Neuen Testaments zu fragen:

1. *Die Frage nach der theologischen Einheit des Neuen Testaments—typisch christlich?*

Jon D. Levenson hat in seinem Aufsatz "Warum Juden sich nicht für biblische Theologie interessieren"²¹ die These formuliert, dass es sich bei der "Bemühung, eine systematische, einheitliche theologische Aussage aus den unsystematischen und polydoxen Materialien in der Hebräischen Bibel zu konstruieren," um ein spezifisch christliches Interesse handele, das es vom Judentum unterscheide²². Er bezeichnet in diesem Zusammenhang die Grundannahme, "dass die zu interpretierende Einheit das Testament ist," als eine "moderne christliche Vorstellung."²³ Sie sei dem Judentum fremd, weil in ihm "die Tendenz (besteht), den Text als Problem mit vielen Facetten zu sehen, von denen jede Beachtung verdient."²⁴

Levensons Beobachtungen beziehen sich zwar auf den Umgang der christlichen Exegeten mit dem Alten Testament, doch denke ich, dass wir sie auch auf unsere Frage nach der Theologie des Neuen Testaments übertragen können. Sie implizierten dann die These, dass die christliche Suche nach der theologischen Einheit des Neuen Testaments die wesensmäßige Affinität des Christentums zum Pluralismus kompensieren will: Die Funktion des neutestamentlichen Ka-

²¹ *EvTh* 51 (1991), pp. 402-430; amerik. Original: "Why Jews Are Not Interested in Biblical Theology," in: J. Neusner/B.A. Levine/E.S. Frerichs (eds), *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel*, Philadelphia 1987, pp. 281-307.

²² Levenson, ebd., p. 421; s. auch p. 423: "... ist es unwahrscheinlich, dass die Suche nach der einen großen Idee, die die Hebräische Bibel durchdringt und zusammenhält, Juden interessiert."

²³ Levenson, ebd., p. 425.

²⁴ Levenson, ebd., p. 426.

nons als Realsymbol für die Einheit des gesamten Christentums werde—so könnte man die These fortschreiben—durch seine (des Kanons) theologische Disparatheit als bedroht angesehen, und aus dieser Einschätzung speise sich das Bemühen um die Feststellung seiner theologischen Einheit.

2. *Das Interesse an einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments—typisch deutsch?*

Robert Morgan geht in seinem jüngst publizierten Aufsatz²⁵ von dem Sachverhalt aus, dass Bücher mit dem Titel "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" in Deutschland viel verbreiteter sind als in der anglo-amerikanischen Welt. Zur Erklärung dieses Phänomens verweist er auf die unterschiedlichen institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen, unter denen hier und dort Neues Testament gelehrt werden: Ausschlaggebend sei vor allem die Konfessionalität der deutschsprachigen Theologischen Fakultäten, die es in der angelsächsischen Welt nicht in diesem Umfang gibt. Die konfessionelle Geschlossenheit der Theologischen Fakultäten im deutschsprachigen Raum vermittele ihren Mitgliedern leichter den Eindruck, dass sie an ein und demselben Gegenstand arbeiteten. Auf diese Weise nötige sie viele Bibelwissenschaftler dazu, nicht nur Exegeten und Historiker, sondern auch Systematische Theologen zu sein. Derselbe Effekt gehe auch von der recht engen Kooperation (und manchmal auch von den Spannungen) zwischen den Theologischen Fakultäten und den Kirchen aus. Beides wirke sich darin aus, dass die Wissenschaft vom Neuen Testament in Deutschland weithin als eine *theologische* Wissenschaft gelten könne und zeitweise die Systematische Theologie nahezu überflüssig gemacht hat.²⁶ Das besondere Interesse an der Theologie des Neuen Testaments—und vor allen Dingen am Aufweis der theologischen Einheit des Neuen Testaments—ließe sich dann auf das Interesse der deutschen Neutestamentler zurückführen, ihr Fach in den innertheologischen interdisziplinären Diskurs einzubringen und für die Kollegen von den anderen theologischen Fächern relevant zu machen.

Mit dieser These ist ein Assoziationszusammenhang eröffnet, der das Bemühen um eine Darstellung der Theologie des Neuen Testa-

²⁵ R. Morgan, "Made in Germany. Towards an Anglican Appropriation of an Originally Lutheran Genre," in: Breytenbach/Frey (eds), *Aufgabe*, pp. 85-112.

²⁶ Morgan, ebd., p. 89.

ments in ein neues Licht stellt: Sie macht bewusst, dass das Modell, das dem Projekt "die Theologie des Neuen Testaments" zugrunde liegt, eigentlich ein systematisch-theologisches Modell ist. "Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments" klingt nämlich so ähnlich wie "die Theologie Friedrich Schleiermachers" oder "die Theologie Karl Barths" und es sieht so aus, dass die Frage nach der theologischen Einheit der neutestamentlichen Schriften, von denselben inhaltlichen Kohärenzerwartungen geleitet ist, wie sie neuzeitlichen theologischen Entwürfen entgegengebracht werden. Dass wir mit dieser These nicht ganz falsch liegen, wird auch daran erkennbar, dass die literarische Struktur der entsprechenden Darstellungen sich im Wesentlichen an den Aufrissen protestantischer Normaldogmatiken orientiert.²⁷

Aufs Ganze gesehen geben die Thesen von Jon Levenson and Robert Morgan zu erkennen, dass die Frage nach einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments Aspekte aufweist, die weit über ihr eigentliches Feld hinausgehen. Gleichzeitig weisen beide Thesen aber auch schon in die Richtung, in die die Frage nach der *Möglichkeit* einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments zu lenken ist.

2. Möglichkeit

Die Frage nach der Möglichkeit einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments "im strengen und eigentlichen," und das heißt: den Singular ernstnehmenden "Sinn"²⁸ möchte ich sogleich mit einer These beantworten, die über den Rahmen dieser Frage hinausführt: Es kann nicht lediglich darum gehen aufzuweisen, ob eine Theologie des Neuen Testaments *möglich* ist, denn es handelt sich hierbei um eine Frage der *Notwendigkeit*: Es ist nicht nur möglich, sondern nötig, den

²⁷ Dasselbe gilt auch für die einzelnen Teile der "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" von U. Schnelle, der die theologischen Konzepte der neutestamentlichen Autoren und ihrer Schriften immer nach ein und demselben Schema darstellt: "Theologie" (d.h. Gotteslehre, M.W.), "Christologie," "Pneumatologie," "Soteriologie," "Anthropologie," "Ethik," "Ekklesiologie," "Eschatologie" und "Theologiegeschichtliche Stellung". Diese Art und Weise der Präsentation macht die einzelnen Entwürfe zwar gut miteinander vergleichbar, ob sie aber auch die Profile der individuellen theologischen Begründungszusammenhänge herauszuarbeiten vermag, ist mehr als zweifelhaft.

²⁸ Hahn, *Theologie* 2, p. 2.

Begründungszusammenhang einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments zu entfalten.

Diese Nötigung ergibt sich aus zwei Gegebenheiten, die unmittelbar miteinander verbunden sind: aus der inneren *Einheit* und der Einzigkeit des neutestamentlichen Kanons und aus seinen äußeren *Grenzen*. Es ist dabei gerade die Verknüpfung dieser beiden Elemente, die die konstitutive Bedeutung des Neuen Testaments für die Wahrnehmung und Darstellung christlicher Identität begründet. Wir können diesen Sachverhalt nach zwei Seiten hin entfalten: in Bezug auf die Entstehungsgeschichte des Kanons und in Bezug auf seine Rezeption.

a. Die Entstehung des Kanons

Der Kanon des Neuen Testaments ist eine historisch gewordene Größe, die sich in dialektischer Weise zu ihrer Vorgeschichte verhält: Im Blick auf die inhaltliche Vielfalt der in ihn aufgenommenen Texte will er gerade in seiner "dem Historiker zugänglichen Vorfindlichkeit"²⁹ nichts anderes als die theologische Einheit der in ihm enthaltenen Schriften zum Ausdruck bringen. Zwei Beispiele können dieses Anliegen zum Ausdruck bringen:

Zum einen können wir auf das Nebeneinander der vier Evangelien mit ihren Abweichungen und Widersprüchen verweisen: Dass die Verschiedenheit der Evangelien als von einer übergeordneten theologischen Einheit umgriffen angesehen wurde, zeigen ihre Überschriften. Obwohl die handschriftliche Überlieferung im Einzelnen voneinander abweicht, wird doch jede einzelne Evangelien-schrift immer nur als εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον usw. bezeichnet.³⁰ Zu übersetzen ist jeweils: "das Evangelium in der Fassung des Matthäus/Markus/Lukas/Johannes." Damit ist zum Ausdruck gebracht, dass keine der einzelnen Evangelien-schriften den Anspruch erheben darf, *das eine* Evangelium zu sein. Hierbei handelt es sich vielmehr um eine literarisch virtuelle Größe, die jenseits der

²⁹ E. Käsemann, "Begründet der neutestamentliche Kanon die Einheit der Kirche?", in: *id.*, *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* 1, Göttingen 1970, pp. 214-233 (Zitat p. 218).

³⁰ So lautet die sog. "Langform". Daneben gibt es auch noch die sog. "Kurzform" κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, κατὰ Μάρκον usw. Sie ist jedoch mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit textgeschichtlich jünger (vgl. M. Hengel, *Die Evangelienüberschriften*, Heidelberg 1984, pp. 10ff; S. Petersen, "Die Evangelienüberschriften und die Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons," *ZNW* 97 (2006), pp. 250-274, bes. 254).

vier unterschiedlichen literarischen Darstellungen der Jesusgeschichte existiert. Damit werden aber auch die Differenzen zwischen den vier Evangelienschriften zusammengehalten durch das theologische Postulat des *einen und einzigen* Evangeliums, das in den schriftlich vorliegenden Evangelien unterschiedliche literarische Gestalten angenommen hat.

Ein anderes Beispiel ist die Ergänzung des Corpus Paulinum um die Briefe der Jakobus, Petrus und Johannes: Dieter Lührmann hat gezeigt,³¹ dass diese Sammlung an Gal. 2:9 orientiert ist, wo Jakobus, Petrus und Johannes mit Paulus und Barnabas die Vereinbarung des Apostelkonvents schließen. Mit diesen Briefen soll ganz offenkundig das theologische Zeugnis der Jerusalemer "Säulen" dem des Paulus komplementär an die Seite gestellt werden, und wir dürfen diesen Vorgang mit Fug und Recht als Zeugnis einer geradezu programmatischen Ökumenizität des neutestamentlichen Kanons interpretieren.

Beiden Beispielen entspricht darüber hinaus, dass in denjenigen altkirchlichen Texten, die den Kanonisierungsprozess begleiten und kommentieren, der Gesichtspunkt der theologischen Kohärenz der neutestamentlichen Schriften an keiner einzigen Stelle auch nur die geringste Rolle spielt. Die entscheidende Rolle spielt vielmehr das Konsensargument: Als maßgebliches Kriterium gilt immer wieder, in wie vielen und in welchen Kirchen eine bestimmte Schrift "gelesen," "benutzt" oder "anerkannt" wird. Und je verbreiteter eine Schrift war, desto größer war die Chance, dass sie in den Kanon Eingang fand.³²

Der neutestamentliche Kanon steht damit in der Kontinuität einer christlichen Grunderfahrung, die schon in seinen ältesten Schriften ihre Spuren hinterlassen hat, in denen die typischen Erfahrungen

³¹ D. Lührmann, "Gal 2,9 und die katholischen Briefe," *ZNW* 72 (1981), pp. 65-87, bes. 70-72. Besonders eindrücklich wird dieser Zusammenhang auch durch die Entsprechungen in der Reihenfolge: In den meisten griechischen Handschriften werden die Jerusalemer Säulen in Gal 2:9 in der Reihenfolge Jakobus, Kephas (Petrus), Johannes genannt, und dem entspricht auch die Reihenfolge der Katholischen Briefe in den jeweiligen Handschriften. Anders der Codex Claromontanus (D 06): Er hat in Gal. 2:9 die Reihenfolge Petrus, Jakobus, Johannes und ordnet auch die Katholischen Briefe in eben dieser Reihenfolge an: 1.-2. Petr, Jak, 1.-3. Joh, Jud.

³² Dem entspricht auch, dass das Kriterium der "Orthodoxie" einer bestimmten Schrift im Sinne ihrer Übereinstimmung mit der überkommenen Lehre der "Kirche" im Kanonisierungsprozess eine größere Rolle gespielt hat, als vielfach angenommen wurde; vgl. dazu die hilfreichen und klärenden Bemerkungen von H.J. de Jonge, "The New Testament Canon," in: J.-M. Auwers/H.J. de Jonge (eds), *The Biblical Canons*, Leuven 2003, pp. 309-319, bes. 312-318.

einer Bekehrungsreligion reflektiert werden: dass nämlich die Zugehörigkeit zu Jesus Christus, die durch die πίστις Χριστοῦ, die Taufe und das Herrenmahl gestiftet wird, eine Einheit konstituiert, die über alle lebensweltlichen Differenzen dominiert und Menschen ganz unterschiedlicher Herkunft und Lebensweisen miteinander verbindet: "Wir, die Vielen sind *ein* Leib, weil wir alle an *einem* Brot teilhaben" (1 Kor. 10:17); oder: 1 Kor. 12:12-13:

Wie der Leib *einer* ist und viele Glieder hat, alle diese Glieder des Leibes aber, auch wenn es viele sind, *ein* Leib sind, so verhält es sich auch mit dem Christus: Denn durch *einen* Geist sind wir alle in *einen* Leib hineingetauft, ob Juden oder Griechen, ob Sklaven oder Freie, und alle sind wir mit *einem* Geist getränkt worden.

Als weitere Beispiele ließen sich Gal. 3:28; 5:6; 6:15 sowie Röm. 10:11-12 anführen:

Jeder, der an ihn glaubt, wird nicht zuschanden, denn es gibt keinen Unterschied zwischen einem Juden und einem Griechen, denn er ist der Kyrios von allen; er macht reich alle, die ihn anrufen.

Noch eine Generation später nimmt der sogenannte Epheserbrief, der auf Grund seiner ursprünglich fehlenden Adresse eigentlich ein katholischer Brief ist, diese Linie auf und stellt in 4:4-6 einen Katalog von identitätsstiftenden Merkmalen zusammen, die *allen* Christen gemeinsam sind, und zwar unabhängig von der mittlerweile erfolgten Ausdifferenzierung der Christenheit in eine Vielzahl von unterschiedlichen Ortsgemeinden mit ihren je eigenen Traditionen und Institutionen: "*ein* Leib und *ein* Geist," "*eine* Hoffnung," "*ein* Herr, *ein* Glaube, *eine* Taufe, *ein* Gott" (s. auch 4:13: "Einheit des Glaubens"; 2:15-18: "*ein* neuer Mensch," "*ein* Leib," "*ein* Geist"). Dass die Ausbildung des neutestamentlichen Kanons tatsächlich in dieser Kontinuität steht, können wir daran erkennen, dass es dank der Ausbildung des Kanons heute möglich ist, diesen Katalog noch um ein weiteres Merkmal zu ergänzen, das es zur Zeit der Abfassung des Epheserbriefes noch nicht gab, nämlich um die *eine* Schrift.

Und noch in einer zweiten Hinsicht setzt die Entwicklung zum neutestamentlichen Kanon hin einen Prozess fort, der bis in die Entstehungszeit der in ihm enthaltenen Schriften selbst zurückreicht: das Bemühen um die Sicherstellung der bleibenden Kontinuität mit den identitätsstiftenden Anfängen der Christentumsgeschichte. Im Neuen Testament selbst wird dieses Bemühen, das mit dem Wandel des

Christentums von einer Bekehrungsreligion in eine Traditionsreligion erforderlich wird, vor allen Dingen an zwei Stellen greifbar: zum einen in dem Prozess der schriftlichen Fixierung der Jesusüberlieferung, dem die vier Evangelien ihre Existenz verdanken, und zum anderen in der Abfassung pseudepigraphischer Apostelbriefe, mit deren Hilfe die apostolische Tradition fortgeschrieben und unter veränderten historischen Bedingungen zur Sprache gebracht wird.

Das Werden des Kanons wird damit als Bestandteil eines christlichen Identitätsmanagements verstehbar, mit dem auf die beiden, eben skizzierten Problemlagen reagiert wird: Zum einen handelte es sich um ein *Kontinuitätsproblem*, d.h. um den als problematisch empfundenen Abstand von den identitätsstiftenden Anfängen der Christentumsgeschichte. Dem Kanon kommt in diesem Zusammenhang die Funktion zu, diese Anfänge bleibend präsent zu halten. Zum anderen kann man aber auch von einem *Kohärenzproblem* sprechen, insofern dem Kanon die Funktion zukam, einer zunehmend diffuser werdenden Ausdifferenzierung der Kirche³³ in eine Vielzahl von über das ganze römische Reich verstreuten Christentümern dadurch entgegenzutreten, dass er ihr den Charakter einer Textgemeinschaft gab, deren Einheit darin zum Ausdruck kam, dass sie ein und denselben Bestand von Texten als identitätsstiftend anerkannte.

b. Die Rezeption des Kanons

So wie der *eine* Kanon und seine Entstehung integraler Bestandteil der Institutionalisierungsgeschichte der *einen* Kirche Jesu Christi sind, so ist es allererst der *Gebrauch* der neutestamentlichen Schriften als "Neues Testament," d.h. als Kanon und "Schrift" gewesen, der sie in ihrer Gesamtheit zum identitätsstiftenden Symbolinventar *aller* Kirchen hat werden lassen und das Christentum zu einer Textgemeinschaft gemacht hat. Die Einheit und die Einzigkeit des neutestamentlichen Kanons fungieren damit als Realsymbol für die Einheit der Kirche Jesu Christi, auch wenn sie sich immer nur in pluralistischen kontextuellen Ausdifferenzierungen darstellen kann. Diese Korrelation von Kanon und Kirche hat darum zur Folge, dass die Wissenschaft vom Neuen Testament gar nichts anderes sein kann als

³³ Wenn hier und im Folgenden von "der Kirche" gesprochen wird, so ist damit immer die gesamte Christenheit in ihrer notwendigen institutionellen Verfasstheit gemeint, die alle existierenden Kirchen in sich einschließt.

eine kirchliche Wissenschaft. Und diejenigen Neutestamentler, die den Kanon als theologischen Referenzrahmen ihrer Arbeit abschaffen wollen, müssen aufpassen, dass sie sich damit nicht auch selbst abschaffen und ihr Geschäft an die Altertumswissenschaftler abtreten. Denn ohne die theologische Bedeutung, die dem Neuen Testament auf Grund seiner kirchlichen Rezeption als *Kanon* zugeschrieben wird, wären die in ihm enthaltenen Schriften nicht mehr als ein Ausschnitt aus der kaiserzeitlichen Literaturgeschichte. Eine Wissenschaft vom Neuen Testament gibt es nur, sofern es ein Neues Testament gibt, und das wiederum gibt es nur in seiner kanonisch gewordenen Gestalt als Geschöpf der Kirche. Dass wir die neutestamentlichen Schriften in *produktionshermeneutischer* Hinsicht als Bestandteil der antiken Literaturgeschichte zu interpretieren haben, kann und darf damit natürlich nicht bestritten werden.

Wichtig ist darüber hinaus schließlich noch ein Weiteres: Die Einheit und die Einzigkeit des Kanons implizieren, dass das Prädikat "kanonisch" nicht etwa den einzelnen *Schriften* eine besondere Dignität verleiht und sie von den außerkanonischen Schriften unterscheidet. Es zeichnet vielmehr allein den *Kanon* in seiner übersummativen Gesamtheit aus. Keine neutestamentliche Schrift ist für sich allein "kanonisch," sondern immer nur zusammen mit anderen, theologisch gegebenenfalls völlig unterschiedlichen Schriften.

c. Ein altes Paradigma

Um zu entfalten, was daraus für die Möglichkeit oder Notwendigkeit einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments folgt, möchte ich ein allseits bekanntes Paradigma reaktivieren, das vielleicht auf den ersten Blick abgedroschen und verstaubt erscheinen mag. Dass ich es trotzdem verwende, liegt daran, dass das Erklärungspotential dieses Paradigmas m.E. noch nicht ausgeschöpft ist und dass es hilft, unsere Fragestellung zu präzisieren.

Im Blick ist nichts anderes als die Unterscheidung, die Gerhard Ebeling vor mehr als 50 Jahren mit Bezug auf den Begriff "Biblische Theologie" formuliert hat: Nach Ebeling kann dieser Begriff zwei Bedeutungen haben: "Er bedeutet entweder: 'die in der Bibel enthaltene Theologie' ... oder: 'die der Bibel gemäße ... Theologie'."³⁴ Auf

³⁴ G. Ebeling, "Was heißt 'Biblische Theologie?'," (engl. 1955), in: *id.*, *Wort und Glaube*, Tübingen 1962, pp. 69-89 (Zitat p. 69).

unser Thema übertragen handelte es sich dann um die Frage, ob "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" bedeutet: "die im Neuen Testament enthaltene Theologie" oder "die dem Neuen Testament gemäße Theologie."³⁵ Dass es sich lohnt, diese Differenzierung in unsere Überlegungen einzubeziehen, kann man schon daran erkennen, dass die ebelingsche Unterscheidung bereits mehr als 60 Jahre vorher bei William Wrede in dem eingangs zitierten Essay auftaucht und auf die Frage nach der Theologie des Neuen Testaments übertragen wird:

Der Name "biblische Theologie" bedeutet ursprünglich nicht eine Theologie, welche die Bibel hat, sondern die Theologie, welche biblischen Charakter hat, aus der Bibel geschöpft ist.³⁶

Dieselbe Unterscheidung impliziert auch der Titel des Sammelbandes, den Cilliers Breytenbach und Jörg Frey vor kurzem herausgegeben haben.³⁷ Sie haben ihrem Buch den sehr aufschlussreichen Titel gegeben: "Aufgabe und Durchführung einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments." Mit der Formulierung "Aufgabe und Durchführung" ist unausgesprochen vorausgesetzt, dass die beiden Herausgeber unter einer "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" nicht mehr eine im Neuen Testament "enthaltene Theologie" verstehen, die historisch rekonstruiert werden könnte. Sie lassen aus ihr praktisch im Handumdrehen eine Theologie werden, die irgendwie neutestamentlichen Charakter hat, ansonsten aber ein Projekt ist, das von heutigen Theologen "durchzuführen" ist. Sie machen die "Theologie des Neuen Testaments" zu einem Geschöpf der Neutestamentler—und es spricht einiges dafür, dass sie in der Tat auch recht daran getan haben.

Diese Programmänderung lässt sich erläutern und begründen, wenn wir die Unterscheidung Gerhard Ebelings dazu benutzen, um die unterschiedlichen Möglichkeiten einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments zu beschreiben:

³⁵ Dieselbe Unterscheidung möchte jetzt auch James Dunn wieder einführen, der die Frage nach der dem Neuen Testament gemäßen Theologie "New Testament Theologizing" nennt und sie von der einfachen Beschreibung der "thought processes of some early Christians in antiquity" unterscheidet (J.D.G. Dunn, "Not so much 'New Testament Theology' as 'New Testament Theologizing'," in: Breytenbach/Frey (eds), *Aufgabe*, pp. 225-246 (Zitat p. 246).

³⁶ Wrede, *Aufgabe*, p. 153.

³⁷ Breytenbach/Frey (ed.), *Aufgabe*.

1. *“Theologie des Neuen Testaments” als historische Disziplin*

Insofern wir unter einer “Theologie des Neuen Testaments” die Frage nach der im Neuen Testament *enthaltenen* Theologie verstehen, handelt es sich um eine *historische* Disziplin. Sie fragt nach den *intentiones auctorum*, und ihr Gegenstand ist die Rekonstruktion der theologischen Begründungszusammenhänge, die in den einzelnen Schriften des Neuen Testaments ihre literarische Gestalt gefunden haben. “Theologie des Neuen Testaments” ist hier eine Form von Theologiegeschichte, und selbstverständlich wird zu den Resultaten dieser Fragestellung gehören, dass wir im Neuen Testament eine pluralistische Vielfalt von “Theologien” vorfinden, die sich nicht nur voneinander unterscheiden, sondern einander z.T. auch eklatant widersprechen. Es ist die Aufgabe einer so verstandenen Theologie des Neuen Testaments, die individuellen Profile der theologischen Konzepte dadurch mit aller Schärfe herauszuarbeiten, dass sie aufzeigt, wie sich ihre Gemeinsamkeiten und Differenzen verteilen und wie sie sich historisch erklären lassen. Gegenüber systematisch-theologischen Kohärenzerwartungen ist darauf zu insistieren, dass die in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments enthaltene Theologie etwas anderes ist als die in den Schriften z.B. Schleiermachers enthaltene Theologie. Darüber hinaus ist bestimmten konfessionellen Exklusivitätsansprüchen entgegenzuhalten, dass es zum Wesen christlicher Theologie gehört, pluralistisch zu sein.

2. *“Theologie des Neuen Testaments” als hermeneutische Disziplin*

Demgegenüber kann eine dem Neuen Testament *gemäße* Theologie nur als eine *hermeneutische* Disziplin recht betrieben werden. Sie unterscheidet sich zwar von der eben beschriebenen *historischen* Fragestellung, doch ist sie nicht ein Konkurrenzunternehmen zu ihr, sondern sie setzt die Rekonstruktion der im Neuen Testament enthaltenen Theologien voraus bzw. arbeitet mit ihr zusammen. Sie fragt auch nicht einfach nach der theologischen Schnittmenge, die diese Theologien trotz ihrer Unterschiedlichkeit gemeinsam haben, denn dadurch würde sie eine wesentliche Eigenart des neutestamentlichen Kanons zum Verschwinden bringen: seine theologische Pluralität.³⁸ Außerdem würde sie dadurch natürlich auch in all diejenigen Aporien geraten, die oben zum Stichwort “Mitte der Schrift” dargelegt

³⁸ S. dazu o. Abschn. I.c.I.

wurden.³⁹ Um solche Missverständnisse zu vermeiden, müssen wir diesem Teil des Projekts also einen anderen Namen geben: Eine dem Neuen Testament gemäße Theologie kann nur *eine der Kanonizität des Neuen Testaments gemäße Theologie* sein. Dabei ist es jedoch nicht so, dass eine solche Theologie den Kanon allererst noch erfinden oder begründen müsste. Er ist ihr vielmehr durch den Gebrauch der Kirche längst vorgegeben. Aus diesem Grunde benötigt die *Kirche* eine Theologie des Neuen Testaments als eine dem Neuen Testament gemäße Theologie, weil nämlich, seitdem und solange es Kirche in Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft gibt, auch diejenigen beiden Probleme dieselben bleiben, die zur Ausbildung des Kanons geführt haben: das *Problem der Kontinuität* und das *Problem der Kohärenz*. Der Unterschied zwischen der Gegenwart und der Zeit vor der Ausbildung des Kanons ist freilich, dass die Kirche den Kanon *hat*, und dass es darum auch eine Theologie des Neuen Testaments geben kann und geben muss. Dass es gerade diese beiden Probleme sind, die eine Theologie des Neuen Testaments für die Kirche erforderlich machen, liegt auf der Hand.

Das *Kontinuitätsproblem* entsteht dadurch, dass die Kirche sich auf Grund ihrer Kulturalität ständig verändert. Das muss auch so sein, denn christliche Identität kann immer nur in bestimmten kulturellen Kontexten zur Anschauung gebracht werden, und dem ständigen Wandel dieser Kontexte kann sich natürlich auch die Kirche nicht entziehen. Es ist jedoch zwingend erforderlich, dass christliche Identität dabei immer auch als *christliche* Identität identifizierbar bleiben muss, die nicht in ihrer jeweiligen kulturellen Kontextualität aufgeht. Die Kirche ist darum immer auch mit dem Erfordernis konfrontiert, sich der bleibenden Identität ihrer Identität zu vergewissern, und zwar durch die theologisch reflektierte Erinnerung an die identitätsstiftenden Anfänge ihrer Geschichte. Diese Anfänge werden durch den Kanon des Neuen Testaments in der Gegenwart präsent gehalten, und es ist die Aufgabe der Theologie des Neuen Testaments, diese Begegnung der aktuellen Kirche mit ihren Anfängen theologisch zu reflektieren.

Dass auch das *Kohärenzproblem* zur kulturellen Existenz von Kirche notwendig dazu gehört, bedarf keiner Begründung. Und auch hier ist der Kanon mittendrin, denn wir erleben immer wieder, wie es

³⁹ S. dazu o. Abschn. I.c.2.

die Intentionen der Leser sind, die über den kirchlichen Gebrauch der neutestamentlichen Texte entscheiden. Prinzipiell kann sich kein Text gegen seine Lektüren oder gegen seine Instrumentalisierung für die Interessen seiner Rezipienten wehren.⁴⁰ In diesem Zusammenhang kommt einer Theologie des Neuen Testaments, die als eine dem Neuen Testament gemäße Theologie betrieben wird, die Aufgabe zu, gewissermaßen in einer Gegenbewegung dazu zur Geltung zu bringen, dass die neutestamentlichen Texte prinzipiell auch von der Intention ihrer Leser unabhängig sind. Sie macht sich zum Anwalt der Autonomie der Texte gegenüber ihren Lesern und deren Interessen, indem sie nach der Intention der Autoren fragt und diese Lektüre als Korrektiv gegen bestimmte Lesarten, als Kritik an interessengeleiteten Instrumentalisierungen der biblischen Texte sowie als Angebot zur Stiftung von existentieller Evidenz formuliert.

Damit ist aber auch klar: Eine so verstandene Theologie des Neuen Testaments kann niemals die Gestalt eines bestimmten Textes gewinnen, und sie kann auch niemals geschrieben werden,⁴¹ denn sie hat weder einen bestimmten Inhalt noch einen bestimmten Wortlaut. Wollte sie trotzdem einen solchen Anspruch erheben, würde sie für sich selbst eine Eigenschaft beanspruchen, die nur dem neutestamentlichen Kanon zukommen kann. Aus diesem Grunde müssen wir es ertragen, dass auch die neutestamentliche Theologie am Kontinuitäts- und Kohärenzproblem der Kirche partizipiert: Als hermeneutische Disziplin ist sie "grundsätzlich nie endgültig zu erledigen ..., sondern (stellt) eine stets mit uns weitergehende Aufgabe dar."⁴² Dieser Sachverhalt hat seinen einfachen Grund darin, dass neutestamentliche Theologie immer nur von Neutestamentlern geschrieben werden kann, die als solche—wie sollte es auch anders sein—ein integraler Bestandteil des Kontinuitäts- und Kohärenzproblems der Kirche sind.

⁴⁰ Dafür haben wir im vergangenen Jahr in Deutschland mit der sog. "Bibel in gerechter Sprache" ein ebenso eindrucksvolles wie erschreckendes Beispiel vorgeführt bekommen, mussten wir doch fast 70 Jahre nach der vom "Institut zur Erforschung (bis 1939: und Beseitigung) des jüdischen Einflusses auf das deutsche kirchliche Leben" herausgegebenen Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments (*Die Botschaft Gottes*, Leipzig 1940) erneut lernen, wie wenig sich biblische Texte dagegen wehren können, schon durch die Übersetzung für aktuelle politische Interessen instrumentalisiert zu werden.

⁴¹ S. auch Ebeling, "Was heißt ...?", p. 86.

⁴² Ebeling, ebd.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE FUNCTION, CHARACTER AND
LOCALIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TOPONYM
ΓΕΝΝΗΣΑΡΕΤ (MARK 6:53; MATTHEW 14:34)

Jürgen K. Zangenberg

In 6:45 Mark reports that, after the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, Jesus sent his disciples to the boat and told them to head off “to the other shore to Bethsaida” (προάγειν εἰς τὸ πέραν πρὸς Βηθσαϊδάν).¹ Jesus himself, the evangelist tells us, stayed a little longer to release the multitude and went to pray on a mountain. Late in the evening Jesus saw the boat in the middle of the lake and the disciples struggling against a strong wind. Deep in the night (περὶ τετάρτην φυλακὴν τῆς νυκτός) he walked across the lake to join the disciples, and the wind calmed down (6:51, see also 4:35-41—remiscences are certainly intended!). Instead of travelling on to Βηθσαϊδά they approached the shore and disembarked ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ... Γεννησαρέτ (Mark 6:53). When on land, Jesus was immediately recognized by the crowds, and as he entered “their villages, towns and farms” (6:56 εἰσπορεύετο εἰς κώμας ἢ εἰς πόλεις ἢ εἰς ἄγρους) people hurried their sick and infirm to him from the entire region (χώρα) and put them down on the market places (ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς) to get in contact with Jesus and be healed by touching him. All this happens in broad daylight and under the eyes of a huge audience. Mark indicates that Jesus stayed in the region for a while, because no earlier than 7:24 it is reported that he “got up and left from there to the region of Tyre” (ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὰ ὄρια Τύρου). That means that Mark locates the entire exposition about purity at Γεννησαρέτ on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, too, the summary passage 6:53-56 and the dispute 7:1-24 being tied together by geography.

¹ It is a pleasure for me to express my respect and gratitude to Henk Jan de Jonge with an article that combines aspects of archaeology and *Landeskunde* with the analysis of a passage from the Synoptics, one of the many New Testament fields Henk Jan's energy and erudition has stimulated so much. I thank Roelien Smit for redactional help and—among others—Uzi Leibner, Stefan Münzer, Yossi Stepanski and Wolfgang Zwickel for discussing various archaeological and topographical issues with me.

Geography creates that kind of stability that allows for vivid change in topic and audience.

The long passage created through the geographical *Klammer* is no random combination of disparate and unconnected material, but is skilfully divided up in a delicate sequence of sub-units. The main characteristic in the description of Jesus is the oscillating change from publicity and openness (healing, instruction of multitude) to seclusion and secrecy (prayer and instruction of disciples). After the public healings in 6:53-56, the focus shifts to another topic. In 7:1 the Pharisees and some scribes from Jerusalem approach Jesus and ask why his disciples would not keep the *παράδοσις τῶν πρεσβυτέρων*, a question Jesus answers with a detailed legal explanation redefining the concepts of purity and impurity (7:1-13). Then, he calls the *ὄχλοι* and makes the decision taken against the arguments of the Pharisees and scribes public to everybody (7:14-15). In a third step, Jesus leaves the multitude and withdraws to "a house" to specially instruct the disciples (7:17). This instruction builds up on the two previous passages, generalizes them and draws the fundamental conclusion that all food is pure (7:19) and only unjust actions and evil thoughts make humans impure (7:21-23). The readers are well aware of these issues. They are led on a path of didactic intensification, they see Jesus interact with various groups and always be on top of events. They not only share the perspective of the "crowd" who sees Jesus as powerful healer and authoritative teacher, but also that of the inner circle of disciples, and are even silent witness to Jesus' most intimate conversation with God in prayer. That puts the readers in a very privileged and unique position of omnipresence, only surpassed by that of the author himself who is not only omnipresent but also omniscient only to give away to the readers what he knows.

These observations should have made it sufficiently evident that geography plays an important role in Mark's narrative strategy by structuring and coloring the plot. Intensive research on ancient historiography has abundantly shown that topography is always intentionally used and—even in references as passing as the one at the end of Mark 6—therefore needs to be taken seriously.² Moreover, Jens

² I have illustrated the role of geography in Matthew's narrative in J. Zangenberg, "Pharisees, Villages and Synagogues in Matthew's Galilee. Reflections on the Theological Significance of Matthew's Geography of Galilee," in: V.A. Lehnert/U. Rüsen-Weinhold (eds), *Lo-*

Schröter, to name only one recent influential voice, has rightly emphasized the importance of the “topographische und narrative Verankerung des Jesusguts” and criticized an approach that isolates logia and episodes from their narrative *Verankerung* to which geography considerably contributes.³ It is naive to use the first as valuable historical information and discard the other as irrelevant redactional addition. I agree with Schröter that it is the “embedding” that makes both logia and episodes so valuable.

In analyzing geographical information in the Gospels and elsewhere we need to carefully distinguish between the literary and historical level. Salvaging geographical information from radical *Formgeschichte* does not rehabilitate that information as trustworthy, historical “fact.” To appreciate the function of geographical information in Mark does not mean to claim that Mark has preserved the “correct” location of the “real” event. While we are often able to describe the role and function of geographical information in a given literary context, we are on much weaker ground when attempting to assess its “historicity.” It of course seems more plausible to assume that Mark adopted a topographical reminiscence than that he simply invented it,⁴ but even then, the question about the reliability of this sources remains valid. Both aspects, historicity and literary function of topographical information, therefore, have to be strictly distinguished.

By discussing a toponym like Γεννησαρέτ, I do not intend to add a footnote to the “Life of the Galilean Jesus,” but to explore what Mark (or the source he adopted) could have envisioned when he located the narrative 6:53-7:23 at such a place and what he could have known

gos—Logik—Lyrik. *Engagierte exegetische Studien zum biblischen Reden Gottes. Festschrift Klaus Haacker*, Leipzig 2007, pp. 151-169, with abundant references.

³ J. Schröter, *Jesus und die Anfänge der Christologie. Methodologische und exegetische Studien zu den Ursprüngen des christlichen Glaubens*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2001, pp. 38-42; G. Häfner, “Das Ende der Kriterien? Jesusforschung angesichts der geschichtstheoretischen Diskussion,” in: K. Backhaus/G. Häfner (eds), *Historiographie und fiktionales Erzählen. Zur Konstruktivität in Geschichtstheorie und Exegese*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2007, pp. 97-130, esp. pp. 100-101.

⁴ Just to name an example for this theory: S.H. Smith, “Bethsaida via Gennesaret. The Enigma of the Sea-Crossing in Mark 6,45-53,” *Bib* 77 (1996), pp. 349-374, assumes that a piece of old tradition is preserved in Mk. 6:53-56 despite its redactional style: “There is little sense behind the place-name Gennesaret unless it derives from a traditional story about something that Jesus did there. On the other hand, the unit is replete with characteristic Markan vocabulary, and it is clearly intended as a summary passage similar to those elsewhere in the Gospels” (pp. 355-356).

about it.⁵ An answer to this question is not only relevant for understanding the Markan text (what precisely *did* Mark mean when he mentioned Γεννησαρέτ), but also for a better understanding of the region in which Mark's plot is situated (*how* does Mark help us in reconstructing the region?). Taking up a recent proposal by Israeli archaeologist Uzi Leibner to have found a place Γεννησαρέτ, I want to go back to the sources and ask what picture about Γεννησαρέτ they draw. Since no inscription is preserved that could help us identify a given place as Γεννησαρέτ, we basically have to do "topography from texts" and attempt to tie archaeological information into that picture as reasonably and carefully as possible. I know that this approach is not without problems and pitfalls, but as long as our question is precisely formulated, our scope remains limited and our approach is made transparent, it might nevertheless be considered legitimate.

1. *Geographical Information in Mark 6:53-56*

It is difficult to unravel the geographical information in Mk. 6:55-56 because the toponym only appears once in Mark and, apart from the parallel in Matt. 14:34, nowhere else in the New Testament.

The Matthean parallel (14:34-36) contributes nothing beyond Mark apart from a few linguistic changes. Luke omits the passages about Jesus' travels on the lake at all and thus also the toponym (absence of Markan narratives between Luke 9:17 and 18). John shares the conjunction of the multiplication story with the journey across the lake with Mark and Matthew, but reports that Jesus went to Capernaum instead of Bethsaida (John 6:16-17, 21). Γεννησαρέτ is not mentioned in John, either, and there is no reason to harmonize the passages in John with the narrative in Mark and Matthew.⁶ Only a

⁵ Cf. further M. Adinolfi, "Il lago di Tiberiade e le sue città nella letteratura greco-romana," *LA* 44 (1994), pp. 365-380; K. Furrer, "Die Ortschaften am See Genesareth," *ZDPV* 2 (1897), pp. 52-74; G. Theissen, "'Meer' und 'See' in den Evangelien. Ein Beitrag zur Lokalkoloritforschung," *SNTU* 10 (1985), pp. 5-25; G. Dalman, *Orte und Wege Jesu. Im Anhang: Die Handschriftlichen Berichtigungen und Ergänzungen in dem Handexemplar Gustaf Dalmans*, Darmstadt 1967 (= Gütersloh 1924), pp. 133-141.

⁶ A harmonization of the Johannine and the Markine/Matthean stories requires the identification of Gennesar with Johannine Capernaum. Such attempts, like the one by E. Robinson, *Later Biblical Researches in Palestine and in the Adjacent Regions. A Journal of the Travels in*

couple of manuscripts of Mark 6:53 and Matt. 14:34 offer Γεννησάρ as a linguistic variant to Γεννησαρέτ in the majority text.

Geographical information in Mark 6 and about Γεννησαρέτ in particular is, unfortunately, quite vague and sketchy. The change in destinations from Βηθσαϊδά to Γεννησαρέτ is unmotivated and raises questions about Mark's geographical accuracy. Did Mark think that in the end Jesus arrived where he intended to go in the first place, or does he imply that the wind (ἄνεμοι ἐναντίοι 6:48) pushed the boat into another direction?

Furthermore, Mark does not indicate where exactly on the lake Γεννησαρέτ is located, nor does the summary passage 6:55-56 reveal any specific details. The information that crowds pour out to see Jesus and bring their sick to him is typical for Mark's *Summarien* (see esp. 3:7-12; 6:33, 36) as well as the reference to "villages, towns, and farms" (see e.g. 6:36, although the combination of all three is remarkable). None of that needs to be indicative of any concrete topographical location.⁷ Neither does the fact that "the" Pharisees and a couple of scribes from Jerusalem gathered by Jesus (7:1), nor the fact that he retired to "a house" (7:17 οἶκος) after a dispute in public contribute much to our understanding of the actual geographic context. Only the "villages, towns, and farms" in the vicinity of Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:56 trigger the question if Γεννησαρέτ might not be one of these κώμαι, πόλεις or ἄγροι.

Despite the vagueness of the Markan account, travelers and scholars from early on have tried to identify the toponym and put it back on the imaginative map of first century CE Galilee.

2. Uzi Leibner's Recent Attempt to Locate Γεννησαρέτ

Israeli archaeologist Uzi Leibner has recently taken up the issue again and—based on his own extensive archaeological work in the

the Year 1852 3, Boston 1857, pp. 348-350, have always caused considerable complications in the localization of Capernaum, cf. W.M. Christie, "Tell Hum the Site of Capernaum," in: Glasgow Oriental Society (ed.), *Studia Semitica et Orientalia*, Glasgow 1920, pp. 13-34, esp. 18; J.C.H. Laughlin, "The Identification of the Site," in: V. Tzaferis (ed.), *Excavations at Capernaum* 1, 1978-1982, Winona Lake 1989, pp. 192-193.

⁷ A. Alt, "Die Stätten des Wirkens Jesu in Galiläa territorialgeschichtlich betrachtet," in: *id.*, *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel* 2, München 1964, pp. 436-455, esp. 436-438; Theissen, "'Meer' und 'See'," p. 23.

region—proposed that Gennesar needs to be sought “on the hill of Abu Shushe.” Thus Leibner at least partly agrees with pioneer Victor Guérin who already suggested Abū Shūshē “to solve the riddle of the disappearance of two settlements, Kinneret and Gennesar.”⁸ Leibner addresses two fundamental assumptions prevalent in most previous research: (a) Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 was a clearly identifiable settlement, and second, (b) that New Testament Γεννησαρέτ must have some connection to כנרת mentioned in the Hebrew Bible.

Leibner’s important study falls into two parts, the first discussing the literary evidence followed by a second part offering an analysis of relevant archaeological material.

Leibner’s first part begins with the observation that the Lake of Galilee was often named according to the largest town on its shores (Magdala: Plinius, *Natural History* V 71; Tiberias: John 6:1; 21:1; Sennabis in Medieval Arabic sources). But this is—as Leibner rightly admits—not a fixed rule: Susita/Hippos and Philoteria did not lend their name, and different terms were used at one and the same time (see Mark 1:16 θάλασσα τῆς Γαλιλαίας parallel to John 21:1 θάλασσα τῆς Τιβεριάδου). Leibner is certainly right in emphasizing that there always existed a close connection between the name of the lake and that of large local settlements, but his specific conclusion that the “use of the name ‘Sea of Gennesar’ was in effect during the period when a settlement of that name was the most important locally” goes too far.⁹ Such a conclusion is unconvincing, because at least in the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods a number of names circulated that not only used towns or cities that lay at the shores of the lake, but also regions in which the lake was located. The New Testament usage is a good example for this fact, as we find names attested that use urban localities (John 6:1; 21:1; Tiberias) as well as others that refer to a region (Mark 1:16; 7:31; Galilee). It is not clear a

⁸ U. Leibner, “Identifying Gennesar on the Sea of Galilee,” *JRA* 19 (2006), pp. 229-245. The results of Leibner’s intensive surveys (which cover almost all of the Ginnosar plain) are synthesized in his still unpublished dissertation U. Leibner, *History of Settlement in the Eastern Galilee During the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods in Light of an Archaeological Survey*, Diss. Bar-Ilan University 2004 (Hebrew). Some of the results are summarized in U. Leibner, “Settlement and Demography in Late Roman and Byzantine Eastern Galilee,” in: A.S. Lewin/P. Pellegrini (eds), *Settlements and Demography in the Near East in Late Antiquity. Proceedings of the Colloquium, Matera 27-29 October 2005*, Pisa-Rome 2006, pp. 105-129.

⁹ Leibner, “Identifying,” p. 229.

priori why the toponym Gennesar should fall into the first category but not the other. While ὕδωρ τοῦ Γεννησάρ is certainly one variant (1 Macc. 11:67, similarly attested in Luke 5:1 λίμνη Γεννησαρέτ), it is by no means the most frequent or prominent. I therefore doubt that we can conclude from ὕδωρ τοῦ Γεννησάρ that at the same time a homonymous settlement existed as well.

Leibner further notes that both Josephus (*War* III 506) and the New Testament (Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34) speak of a χώρα in connection to Γεννησαρέτ, Josephus explicitly adding that the Lake has taken its name from the χώρα. Leibner points to passages showing that such χώραι have often been named after a neighboring large city (cf. Mark 5:1) and raises the question “if there was a settlement with this name, or whether ‘Gennesar’ was the name of a district and not a specific settlement.”¹⁰ Here, Leibner certainly has a point, but the question is if there is enough evidence independent of these authors which could clearly demonstrate that Γεννησαρέτ indeed refers to a settlement.

Rabbinic literature, Leibner claims, does provide such evidence. He claims that the “identification of the Biblical Kinneret (*scil.* in *y.Meg.* 1:5 [70a]) with a site named Gennesar demonstrates that the sages were familiar with an actual site of this name, but it is not clear if it was inhabited in their day.”¹¹ According to Medieval sources “(i)t seems that ‘Gennesar’ as a name for the valley continued in use for centuries after the settlement itself was abandoned.”¹² In later sources Gennesar’s precise location more and more becomes uncertain, and the question is allowed if variations are a result of poor surveying (as Leibner claims in case of Jacotin) or if that uncertainty rather resulted from competing attempts to locate a site that was only known through literature—a piece of “Schriftgelehrsamkeit” (as I am inclined to argue). I will get back to that question shortly.

In the second part of his study Leibner surveys the archaeological evidence, concluding from the available material that neither Tell el-°Orême nor Ḥān Minye, Ḥirbet el-Minye, Tell el-Hunud or Magdala are likely candidates for a site called Gennesar. Instead, the large site of Ġuwēr Abū Shūshē (grid ref. 1978/2521) provides enough

¹⁰ Leibner, “Identifying,” p. 230.

¹¹ Leibner, “Identifying,” p. 231.

¹² Leibner, “Identifying,” p. 232.

appropriate material to substantiate an identification with Gennesar. The site was inhabited during the Hellenistic to Byzantine Periods, and was large enough to lend its name to the valley. In conclusion,

analysis of the historical sources shows that the ancient "valley of Gennesar" is to be identified with el-Ghuweir valley lying north of Tiberias and west of the Sea of Galilee, and excavation and survey evidence from sites in the valley demonstrates that the site known in generations as Ghuweir Abu Shushe in the W part of the valley is the only one that can be identified with Gennesar, for it was both the only one in the valley during the Hellenistic period and probably the most important one on the W shore of the Sea of Galilee in that period, thereby giving its name to the lake. The name was changed to "Sea of Tiberias" following the establishment of the city by that name.¹³

By presenting new material from Ġuwēr Abū Shūshē Leibner has undoubtedly made an important contribution to the discussion about the character of Γεννησαπέτ. The site certainly was inhabited in the relevant period and enjoyed a strategic location. *If* the texts required us to assume that Γεννησαπέτ indeed (also) was the name of a settlement, Ġuwēr Abū Shūshē would indeed be a good candidate. The problem, however, lies with the "if" at the beginning of the sentence. I develop my argument by first taking a look at the connection between Hebrew Bible כנרת and Γεννησαπέτ, then I survey the meaning of Γεννησαπέτ, and finally we return to the Markan passage from which we started.

3. Γεννησαπέτ and Hebrew Bible כנרת

a. Γεννησαπέτ, כנרת and Tell el-^cOrēme

It is necessary to start our journey with this issue because one can still read in popular accounts that "the Gennesareth of the time of Jesus was a small hamlet situated within the remains of the Iron Age acropolis walls [scil. of Tell el-^cOrēme]."¹⁴ Leibner rightly rejects

¹³ Leibner, "Identifying," pp. 238-244 (conclusion p. 244).

¹⁴ J.J. Rousseau/R. Arav, *Jesus and His World. An Archaeological and Cultural Dictionary*, Minneapolis 1995, p. 110; cf. also M. Nun, "Ports of Galilee. Modern Drought Reveals Harbors from Jesus' Time," *BAR* 25.4 (1999), pp. 18-31, 64, esp. 23: "At the end of the Second Temple period, a new town called Gennesar was built at the foot of the hill; today this is the site of the national (*sic*!) water carrier's pumping station. A small agricultural settlement also existed on

such a view. After much insecurity about the localization of Hebrew *כנרת* and its New Testament equivalent,¹⁵ Gustav Dalman and William F. Albright independently from each other suggested to identify *כנרת* with Tell el-^cOrēme located at the northwestern end of the Lake of Galilee.¹⁶ This identification is now univocally accepted. With it, Dalman and Albright indirectly undermined any attempts to locate New Testament Γεννησαρέτ on Tell el-^cOrēme.

When Volkmar Fritz started large-scale excavations on Tell el-^cOrēme in 1982, he was quickly able to show substantial remains of several subsequent Bronze- and Iron Age strata (thereby confirming Dalman's and Albright's identification of *כנרת* with Tell el-^cOrēme), but he also made it clear that there was no continuous occupation on the hill until the New Testament period and beyond. To the contrary: the city Fritz found was destroyed in the wake of the Assyrian conquest of Northern Israel around 700 BCE and—apart from a disputed building possibly from the sixth century BCE¹⁷—was never rebuilt. After a long gap in settlement only a single, small farmstead existed between the second half of the third until the second half of the second century BCE.¹⁸ It is therefore inconceivable that New Testament Γεννησαρέτ in any way refers to Tell el-^cOrēme. Γεννησαρέτ and Hebrew *כנרת* are not two names of one and the same topographical feature, but clearly to be distinguished. Neither was Γεννησαρέτ the successor of *כנרת*, nor is it certain if Γεννησαρέτ refers to a settlement at all.

the top of the hill. In shape and layout, the Kinnrot (*sic*!) anchorage resembles the others on the Sea of Galilee. We may assume that the inhabitants of Gennesar, with the help of the villagers, built this anchorage which, although some distance from the town, was suitable for the construction of a port."

¹⁵ Different localizations were suggested such as Bethsaida, Tell Hūm, Hīrbet el-Minye and Hān el-Minye, even Tell el-^cOrēme; cf. A.E. Mader, "Die Ausgrabung eines römischen Kastells auf Chirbet el-Minje an der Via Maris bei el-Tābgħa am See Gennesareth," *JPOS* 13 (1933), pp. 209-218, esp. 210-213; C. Kopp, "Christian Sites around the Sea of Galilee. II: Bethsaida and el-Minyeh," *DomSt* 3 (1950), pp. 10-40; V. Fritz, "Kinneret und Ginnosar. Voruntersuchung für eine Ausgrabung auf dem Tell el-^cOrēme am See Genezareth," *ZDPV* 94 (1978), pp. 32-45, esp. 44; G. Kroll, *Auf den Spuren Jesu*, Leipzig ¹¹1990, pp. 211-213.

¹⁶ Dalman, *Orte und Wege*, pp. 118-120; W.F. Albright, "Contributions to the Historical Geography of Palestine," *AASOR* 2-3 (1923), pp. 1-46, esp. 36-37. On the history of research see Fritz, "Kinneret und Ginnosar," and *id.*, *Kinneret. Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen auf dem Tell el-^cOrēme am See Gennesaret 1982-1985*, Wiesbaden 1990, pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ R. Kletter/W. Zwickel, "The Assyrian Building of Ayyelet ha-Shahar," *ZDPV* 122 (2006), pp. 151-186, esp. 169.

¹⁸ On the farmstead see Fritz, *Kinneret*, pp. 103-110.

b. *On the Nachgeschichte of the Toponym כנרת*

The connection between Γεννησαρέτ and כנרת is not only doubtful on archaeological grounds, there are also linguistic questions.

Apart from two references in Egyptian texts,¹⁹ the toponym Kinneret (כנרת) appears in the Hebrew Bible as reference to a lake (Num. 34:11; Deut. 3:17; Josh. 12:3), to the region surrounding the lake (Josh. 11:2; 1 Kgs 15:20) and as name of a fortified city in the area of the tribe of Naftali (Josh. 19:35). With respect to the current insecurity about the date of historical sources in the Hebrew Bible it is very difficult to determine how long the toponym כנרת remained in everyday use after the Iron II settlement had been destroyed around 700 BCE. A couple of observations, however, might help answer this question.

(1) Extrabiblical attestations for Hebrew כנרת do not exist for the Iron II-period, and other phonetic equivalents do not go beyond the eighth or seventh century BCE. The most likely candidate for a successor to כנרת is its Greek form in LXX, cf. here Num. 34:11 (ἐπὶ νώτου θαλάσσης Χεναρα, *v.l.* Alexandrinus: Χενερετ), Josh. 12:3 (ἕως τῆς θαλάσσης Χενερεθ); 13:27 (ἕως μέρους τῆς θαλάσσης Χενερεθ). Between the end of the Iron-Age II town around 700 BCE and the temporarily closest attestation of the toponym כנרת lies a minimum span of 450 years (if one wishes to date the Greek translation of the Pentateuch into the mid-third century BCE).²⁰ The word form, however, is important to note. The Greek version represents an exact transliteration of the Hebrew *Vorlage*, כ being substituted by χ at the beginning of the word as witnessed also elsewhere in the LXX (but cf. *v.l.* Κενερεθ in Josh. 11:2 and Κενερεθ in Josh. 19:35 in codex Vaticanus). Despite the rather archaic orthography it seems quite unlikely that the word form represented by the LXX preserves the name of an inhabited site. Instead, the Greek transliteration reflects the LXX's tendency to preserve the sound of the Hebrew original as faithfully as possible.

¹⁹ See here Fritz, *Kinneret*, pp. 176-178 with references.

²⁰ On the date of the LXX Pentateuch see e.g. A. van der Kooij, "The Septuagint of the Pentateuch and Ptolemaic Rule," in: G.N. Knoppers/B.M. Levinson (eds), *The Pentateuch as Torah. New Models for Understanding its Promulgation and Acceptance*, Winona Lake 2007, pp. 289-300.

(2) After the transliteration in the LXX the transmission of the ancient name כנרת breaks off for several centuries. Only the Rabbis refer to it in their discussions (see below), but these passages reveal more about their uncertainty concerning the precise location of כנרת than continuous everyday familiarity. At least, the Rabbinic discussion makes evident that the old Hebrew name form כנרת only plays a role where people have to deal with difficult passages from the Hebrew Bible. Moreover, all relevant Rabbinic references to כנרת are considerably late (second or third century CE at the earliest), so that we cannot possibly speak of a continuous survival of an old place name, but rather of a learned revival of an older term, inspired by the Biblical text. The traditional Hebrew כנרת gradually disappeared from the living language after the Iron-II settlement was destroyed by the Assyrians, and only features where the interpretation of passages in the Hebrew Bible required it. Only the biblical text, from time to time transferred into a much later historical context, and not continuous habitation made sure that the name כנרת did not completely vanish from memory.

(3) Suddenly, a new variant of the name appears in Hasmonean times, which might have come into existence somewhat earlier, and remained in use during the entire Hellenistic and Roman antiquity. The oldest attestation can be found in a short note in 1 Macc. 11:67, to be dated around 100 BCE,²¹ according to which Jonathan in the year 145 BCE set up a camp on his way to Cadesh in Upper Galilee ἐπὶ τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦ Γεννησάρ. The morphological similarities between Greek Γεννησάρ and Hebrew כנרת cannot conceal significant linguistic differences. The original *Anlaut k* is replaced by a *g*, the middle vowel is now longer in conjunction with the duplication of the preceding consonant (Χενερεθ becoming Γεννησάρ; but there are orthographic variants).

The only morphological variation in the new Greek toponym occurs at the end. Next to the basic Γεννησάρ (apart from 1 Macc. 11:67 also attested in Josephus, *War* III 463, 515 and elsewhere) we also find a "Hebraizing" version ending with *-et* (Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53, Luke 5:1, Matt. 14:34; cf. also in the Hebrew Bible כנרת)

²¹ The dating follows E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)* 3 (rev. and ed. G. Vermes/F. Millar/M. Goodman), Edinburgh 1986, p. 181; J.A. Goldstein, *1 Maccabees*, Garden City 1976, p. 63: "a date in the reign of Alexander Jannaeus."

and an "Aramaizing" version ending in *-a* (*Genesara* in Plinius, *Natural History* V 71; cf. also the derived variant *lacus Sara* in Solinus, *Collectanea* 35:3).²² All these versions practically existed at the same time without any differences in meaning.²³ With respect to the apparent congruence between the Greek and Latin versions throughout all literary contexts (New Testament, Jewish and pagan writers) it seems beyond doubt that the new toponym must in turn ultimately go back to a Semitic *Vorlage* which today only occurs in later Rabbinic texts (see below).

The process of how and why the new toponym replaced the older one largely remains obscure. Extreme caution is required. I cannot see a direct linguistic connection from Hebrew כנרת to Greek Γεννησάρ, since no intermediate steps can be identified in the sources. One also has to remember that the first attestation in 1 Macc. 11:67 does not even preserve the consonantal core of Hebrew כנרת in its entirety.²⁴ It therefore seems that Greek Γεννησάρ is not the product of a sound shift from biblical Hebrew כנרת, but an entirely new word whose first syllable is possibly based on the Hebrew and Aramaic גן (garden, in its plural constructive form גני). Similar place names with the component גן are of course well known. In this context it is

²² The passage reads: *Est et lacus Sara extentus passuum sedecim milibus circumsaepus urbibus plurimis et celebribus, ipse par optimis. Sed lacus Tiberiadis omnibus anteponitur, salubris ingenio aestu et ad sanitatem usu efficaci* (third century CE?, in *GLAJJ* II, pp. 418-422).

²³ I only briefly mention that next to the Semitic toponym another form came to be used for the lake (John 21:1 θάλασσα τῆς Τιβεριάδος; Josephus, *War* III 57; IV 456; Eusebius, *Onomasticon* 72:21; 74:14; 162:4), following the name of the city of Tiberias founded between 18 and 20 CE (Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII 36-38). The pleonastic form θάλασσα τῆς ἱαλλυαίας τῆς Τιβεριάδος in John 6:1 is unique. A. Schlatter, *Die hebräischen Namen bei Josephus*, Gütersloh 1913, p. 38, adds another aspect: "In der rabbinischen Literatur heißt der See nur in den Targumen Meer von Gennesar im Anschluß an das Meer von Kinnereth des Bibeltextes, sonst immer Meer von Tiberia." It is interesting to see that the Targumim replaced the anachronistic Kinneret by the more common Gennesar. That obviously reflects the preferences of spoken over against written language.

²⁴ Thus e.g. E.A. Knauf (see the observation by Hübner in Fritz, *Kinneret*, p. 182 n. 40); and U. Hübner, "Dic 3. Grabungskampagne 1984 auf dem Tell el-'Orème am See Gennesaret," *HIL* 117.2-3 (1985), pp. 11-19. Hübner writes on the ethnological and sociological implications of the language shift: "Dieser Übergang ist besonders gut denkbar, wenn der semitische Name in hellenistischer Zeit und römischer Zeit von Nichtsemiten rezipiert wurde, die vielleicht unter den Kolonisten im nahen Philoteria (...) zu suchen sind" (p. 16). If correct, the question arises why this usage was adopted so quickly and throughout all ranges of Greek and Latin literature, whereas any traces of the Semitic original were obliterated. Despite the valuable comments by Knauf and Hübner I still consider the assumption of a morphological continuity hypothetical.

interesting to observe that several Rabbinic passages consider the possibility to derive the word Ginnosar from the very same root גן (cf. below on *b.Meg.* 5b-6a). The second component סרה/ת is more difficult to explain.

(4) The “Hebraizing” variant Γεννησαρέτ ending with -τ/-ετ instead of Γεννησάρ can perhaps be understood as a secondary imitation of כנרת which, of course, was still known from the biblical texts. One indication that Γεννησαρέτ represents a secondary assimilation might be that such a hybrid form only occurs in “biblicizing” texts like Mark 6:53, Matt. 14:34, Luke 5:1. In later Christian sources the influence of the important toponym Ναζαρέτ might also have played a role in keeping the variant alive.

The previous considerations might be summed up as follows: The lack of whatever continuity between Hebrew כנרת and Greek Γεννησάρ supports the picture gained from archaeology that a continuous occupation of Tel Kinrot/Tell el-^oOrēme has definitively ended shortly after 700 BCE.²⁵ No matter how one wants to interpret the short-lived “Assyrian Palace,” it is likely that the 700 BCE destruction caused the former population to leave the site, which led to the subsequent disappearance of the traditional toponym in everyday language. It is significant that the disappearance of כנרת affected not only the toponym of a settlement, but the whole range of Biblical nomenclature quoted above. This makes the question even more pressing what the substitute term Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53 actually means. Was it used for a region, the lake or a single, identifiable site? As the New Testament does not help much further, it is time to look at the non-New Testament sources.

4. Γεννησαρέτ κτλ. in *Ancient Literature Outside the New Testament*

a. Γεννησαρέτ as Designation for the Lake of Galilee

A number of ancient texts use the toponym Γεννησάρ as designation for the Lake of Galilee.²⁶ Although such a specific usage is not

²⁵ R. Kletter/W. Zwickel, “The Assyrian Building of Ayyelet ha-Shahar,” *ZDPV* 122 (2006), pp. 151-186.

²⁶ On ancient non-Jewish sources on Galilee see S. Cappelletti, “Non-Jewish Authors on Galilee,” in: J. Zangenberg/H.W. Altridge/ D.B. Martin (eds), *Religion, Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Galilee. A Region in Transition*, Tübingen 2007, pp. 69-81. On the Lake of Galilee

entirely clear in our oldest attestation of Γεννησάρ (1 Macc. 11:67),²⁷ it is most evident in Josephus (*War* III 463 ἡ καλεῖται Γεννησάρ πρὸς τῶν ἐπιχωρίων; III 515 ἡ Γεννησάρ).²⁸ The New Testament form Γεννησαρέτ is also attested by pagan geographers. Strabo's description of northern Palestine is especially interesting (XVI 2.16): Palestine ἔχει δὲ καὶ λίμνην, ἣ φέρει τὴν ἀρωματῖτιν σχοῖνον καὶ κάλαμον, ὥς δ' αὐτῶς καὶ ἔλη καλεῖται δ' ἡ λίμνη Γεννησαρίτις. Just as 1 Maccabees, Strabo takes over the name of the lake from the geographical tradition without having to explain it. The word form is interesting, too, because through its ending on -ίτις it resembles toponyms that were used since the time of the Ptolemies.²⁹ If this is the case, two interesting conclusions could be drawn from the evidence. First, the name form Γεννησάρ might be even older than the Ptolemaic period, because Γεννησαρίτις evidently presupposes the toponym Γεννησάρ; second, one could suppose that the designation of the lake was derived from the surrounding region, because toponyms ending with -ίτις usually refer to regions not lakes. The Latin name of the Dead Sea (*lacus asphaltitis*) does not contradict this hypothesis, because the component *asphaltitis* is clearly a derivative similarly based on a most characteristic feature. Consequently, λίμνη Γεννησαρίτις has to be translated as "the lake in the Gennesaret region." It is therefore also conceivable why Strabo was able to use the same Γεννησαρίτις both for the Lake and the neighboring plain. A settlement with the same name, however, does not appear in Strabo.

In the second half of the first century CE Pliny the Elder writes in the context of his description of the course of river Jordan (*Natural History* V 71)

Ergo ubi prima convallium fuit occasio, in lacum se fundit, quem plures Genesaram vocant, XVI p. longitudinis, VI latitudinis, amoenis circumsaeptum oppidis, ab oriente Iuliade et Hippo, a meridie Tarichea, quo

see also D.R. Edwards, "Gennesaret," *ABD* 2 (1992), p. 963; J. Zangenberg, "Genezareth," *RGZ* 4 (2000), p. 670.

²⁷ According to A. Schlatter, *Die hebräischen Namen bei Josephus*, Gütersloh 1913, p. 38, τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦ Γεννησάρ in 1 Macc. 11:67 refers to a spring situated at the Lake or in the vicinity; Josephus, *Ant.* XIII 158 quotes 1 Macc. 11:67 with the words τὰ ὕδατα τὰ Γεννησαρά; according to Schlatter *War* III 519 also refers to this spring (Heptapegon?; cf. Mader, "Die Ausgrabung eines römischen Kastells," p. 218).

²⁸ Apart from that Josephus uses the adjective ἡ λίμνη ἡ Γεννησαρίτις (*Ant.* XVIII 28, 36).

²⁹ Cf. here C.G. den Hertog, "Erwägungen zur Territorialgeschichte Koilesyriens in früh-hellenistischer Zeit," *ZDPV* 111 (1995), pp. 168-184, esp. 173-174.

*nomine aliqui et lacum appellant, ab occidente Tiberiade, aquis calidis salubri.*³⁰

Although Pliny reports that the lake was surrounded by numerous settlements, he only mentions a few of them by name. The criteria for this selection are not quite evident, the available sources, however, and the interests of his educated Roman readers certainly played a role: Julias and Hippos might have been mentioned due to their political and cultural importance as border towns resp. as part of the Decapolis, their at least partly pagan population and their double Aramaic and Greek/Latin names. Tarichaea which in the first century CE was certainly inhabited by a population composed of Jews and non-Jews is on the list because some called the Lake after it, and Tiberias also features on it due to its "imperial" name and its hot springs which always triggered the interest of Roman readers. All other places remain unmentioned, neither small Gergesa nor Capernaum (the latter certainly not without importance in the first century), nor large and famous Gadara a short distance inland but connected to the Lake by a harbour, nor one of the many fishing villages are mentioned. Like Strabo 80 years before, Pliny does neither explain the origin nor the meaning of *Genesara*. He apparently took the name from one of his many sources (Strabo?). It is notable that Pliny does not use *Genesara* as a designation of a settlement, but instead mentions the rather unusual reference to Tarichaea.

In Eusebius, too, Γεννησαρῖτις serves as designation for the lake (*Onomasticon* LVIII 12 on Bethsaida: κεῖται δὲ ἐν τῷ Γαλιλαίᾳ πρὸς τῇ Γεννησαρίτιδι λίμνῃ and CXX 2 on Capernaum: παρὰ τὴν Γεννησαρῖτιν λίμνην).

In none of these references do we find a homonymous settlement.³¹ One could therefore suspect that Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 does not indicate a specific place. But Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 also exclude that the passages refer to the lake (ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ...

³⁰ "For this reason at the first opportunity afforded by the formation of the valleys it widens out into a lake usually called the Sea of Gennesareth. This is 16 miles long and 6 broad, and is skirted by the pleasant towns of Bethsaida and Hippos on the east, El Kereh on the south (the name of which place some people also give to the lake), and Tabariah with its salubrious hot springs on the west" (quoted from H. Rackham [ed., trans.], *Pliny Natural History* 2, Cambridge MA/London 1947). On Strabo and Pliny as sources on the Galilee cf. S. Cappelletti, "Non-Jewish Authors on Galilee," pp. 69-81.

³¹ Confirmed also by Leibner, "Identifying," p. 230.

εἰς Γεννησαρέτ Mark 6:53). If Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 neither have the lake nor a specific settlement in the background only one option remains.

b. Γεννησάρ as Designation for the Plain West of the Lake of Galilee

The most elaborate description of a geographical feature named Γεννησάρ is undoubtedly a lengthy excursus that Josephus inserted into his narrative just before his report on the maritime battle between the rebels and Vespasian near Magdala in the year 68 CE (*War* III 516-521).³² This passage provides the key to understanding the toponym in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34. While Strabo's brief sentences still leave some doubt, Josephus explicitly states at the outset that the region along the western shore of the lake bears the same name as the lake itself (παρατείνει δὲ τὴν Γεννησάρ ὁμώνυμος χώρα). This passage is followed by a detailed description of the fertility and human use of the plain. Indeed, alluvial soil accumulated by the three brooks Naḥal ʿAmūd (Wādī ʿAmūd), Naḥal Zalmōn (Wādī er-Rabaḍiye, Wādī Sellāme) and Naḥal Arbēl (Wādī Hamām), and plenty of water created extremely favourable conditions for growing a large number of plants, among them walnuts, date palms, fig trees and olives (*War* III 515-518). The region was densely settled in the Roman period and touched upon the larger urban centers Tiberias and Taricheae/Magdala, as well as the town Capernaum at its northern margin. Josephus' report ends with exact figures on its size: 30 stadia in length (north-south) and 20 stadia in width (east-west) (μῆκος δὲ τοῦ χωρίου παρατείνει κατὰ τὸν αἰγίλαδὸν τῆς ὁμωνύμου λίμνης ἐπὶ σταδίου τριάκοντα καὶ εὗρος εἴκοσι, *War* III 521). There can be no doubt that Josephus' description refers to the plain currently known as el-Ġuwēr and extending along the western shore of the Lake between Magdala and Tell el-ʿOrēme. It is significant that Josephus mentions no settlement with a name like Γεννησάρ despite all details in his excursus.

³² See here G. Boettger, *Topographisch-historisches Lexicon zu den Schriften des Flavius Josephus*, Leipzig 1879, pp. 130-132; C. Kopp, *Die heiligen Stätten der Evangelien*, Regensburg 1959, pp. 252-259; J. Finegan, *The Archaeology of the New Testament. The Life of Jesus and the Beginning of the Early Church*, Princeton 1992, p. 78 (map): between Wādī Hamām just north of Magdala and Tell el-ʿOrēme/Hirbet el-Minye. Josephus describes the Ginnosar plain with almost epic words "in terms as glowing as those he used for" Jericho (148); see also Leibner, "Identifying," p. 232.

Later Rabbinic texts confirm Josephus's picture of the plain's exuberant fertility. *Ber. Rab.* 99:12 on Gen. 49:21, e.g., reports that בקעת גניסר "lets her fruit ripen as swiftly as a stag,"³³ and *Sifre Dev.* 355 explains Deut. 33:23 ("Naftali is filled with grace, filled with the blessing of the Lord") with reference to בקעת גניסר.³⁴ But do they also imply a settlement that—as Leibner has suggested in connection to Greek χώρα—could have given the plain its name?

c. The Name of a Settlement? The Rabbinic and Early Christian Post-New Testament Attestations

So far none of the discussed passages gave a positive indication to the existence of a settlement with the name Γεννησαρέτ or similar variants. Contrary to Leibner, I think that Rabbinic texts offer no fundamentally different picture. The data can be presented as follows in approximate chronological order.³⁵

(1) The oldest relevant Rabbinic text *m.Maas.* 3:7 deals with the question which buildings are exempt from tithing and states: "Storage huts, watchtowers, and field sheds are exempt. A hut of גניסר Gennesar, even though it contains millstones and poultry, is exempt."³⁶ Since huts and sheds of this kind are typical for ancient gardens and plantations, *m.Maas.* 3:7 accords well with Josephus' description of Ginnosar as a proverbially fertile region. The discussion about the Eruv in *t.Er.* 7:13 is comparable. Here, dense occupation with agarian buildings in private ownership has motivated a special commandment with reference to Ginnosar. Here, as well as in *t.Nid.* 3:11, the Tosefta sees in גניסר undoubtedly a stretch of land. The same picture emerges from *t.Shevi.* 7:10-11 (par. *b.Pes.* 52b; *y.Shevi.* 9:2 [38d:55-649]).³⁷ None of these passages refers to a settlement in the stricter sense.

³³ In G. Reeg, *Die Ortsnamen Israels nach der rabbinischen Literatur*, Wiesbaden 1989, p. 143.

³⁴ Cf. Reeg, *Die Ortsnamen*, p. 142, with reference to Rabbi Yona quoted in *y.Bik* 1:12; see further Leibner, "Identifying," pp. 230-232.

³⁵ Kopp, *Die heiligen Stätten*, pp. 254-259, provides a considerably different interpretation of these passages.

³⁶ M.S. Jaffee, in: J. Neusner (ed.), *The Mishnah. A New Translation*, New Haven 1988, p. 126.

³⁷ Reeg, *Die Ortsnamen*, pp. 628-629.

The discussion in *t.B.B.* 5:6 appears to be different, however. Here, גניסר is mentioned as Rabbi Jonathan ben-Harsha's place of origin. Whereas Windfuhr in his commentary rightly states that this place name means "die schmale Niederung am NW-Ufer des Genezareth-Sees,"³⁸ Lisowski and others draw the conclusion from *t.B.B.* 5:6 and *t.Toh.* 6:7 that גניסר can "nur ein Ort sein, für den nur die Küstenebene im Nordwesten des Sees von Galiläa in Frage kommt, von der er seinen Namen als Scc Genezareth erhalten hat."³⁹ If this reading is correct, it would provide the only certain indication of גניסר as a settlement. Following *m.Maas.* 3:7 and *t.Er.* 7:13, however, it is not improbable that the plain was regarded as a geographical feature prominent enough in itself to indicate Rabbi Jonathan ben-Harsha's place of origin.

In *y.Hag.* 77b:62-76, the agrarian character of the Ginnosar plain provides the background for another halakhic regulation:

Once Elisha was sitting and studying in the plain of Gennesaret, and he saw a man climb to the top of a palm tree, take a mother bird with her young, and descend safely.⁴⁰

A different issue is put forward in *y.Meg.* 1:1 (70a:37-45), where גניסר is without hesitation identified with כנרת from Josh. 19:35. At first sight, the passage seems to contradict our claim that there is no factual continuity between Old Testament כנרת and later גניסר. But the text goes on:

R. Levi objected: Lo, it is written 'And the Arabah to the Sea of Kinrot' (כנרות Josh. 12:3). If you interpret the former verse as you have, then there will be two cities named Gennosar.—No that is not the case. They were two independent jurisdictions, for example, Bet Yerah and Sinbarai, which produce shrubby trees.⁴¹

³⁸ W. Windfuhr, *Die Tosefta. Seder VI. Toharot, Band 1. Kelim Baba Kamma—Nega'im*, Stuttgart 1960, p. 169 n. 17; so also G. Dalman, *Orte und Wege Jesu. Im Anhang: Die Handschriftlichen Berichtigungen und Ergänzungen in dem Handexemplar Gustaf Dalmans*, Darmstadt 1967 (= Gütersloh 1924), pp. 138-139.

³⁹ G. Lisowski et al., *Die Tosefta. Seder VI. Toharot, Band 2. Para—Mikwaot*, Stuttgart 1965, p. 57, Anm. 70.

⁴⁰ J. Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel. A Preliminary Translation and Explanation* 20, Chicago 1986, p. 48.

⁴¹ J. Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel. A Preliminary Translation and Explanation* 19, Chicago 1987, p. 9. On Sennabis which is located at the south end of the lake cf. S. Klein, *Beiträge zur Geographie und Geschichte Galiläas*, Leipzig 1909, pp. 90-91.

Rabbi Levi's comment is prompted by the similarly different spelling כנרת in Josh. 19:35 in comparison with that of כנורות in Josh. 12:3 which looks like a feminine plural. It is interesting to see that the assumption of two homonymous places is countered by a completely different theory: Josh. 12:3 is contrasted with 19:35 and the identification of כנרת with גניסר is defended. The existence of a settlement named גניסר and identified with traditional כנרת is not strictly required by the argumentation in *y.Meg.* 1:1 (70a:37-45). As the wider context shows, the assumption of two places with the same name is only hypothetical. Any decision, however, is somewhat complicated through the fact that the discussion of the identification of כנרת with גניסר takes place in the context of the initial sentence: "And so it has been taught: Those which are near a city and are part of its landscape—lo, they are in its status."⁴² It is thus not clear if the discussion is specifically related to Josh. 19:35 whose role in the wider context is rather marginal. It is perhaps significant that in *b.Meg.* 5b-6a the explication of כנרת by reference to the sweet fruits of a thorny bush occurs side by side with the identification of the singular form כנרת with גניסר: "Kinnereth is Gennesaret. And why was it called Kinnereth? Because its fruits are sweet like the music of a harp [כנור]."⁴³

The results of the survey through Rabbinic literature so far, one must conclude, are quite vague. Although the identification of גניסר with כנרת can be found virtually in all relevant Rabbinic texts, none of them gives a firm clue where this place would have to be located. This picture can best be understood if no settlement with that name existed (anymore) in the time of the Rabbis. Considerable uncertainty about the location of כנרת is also evident in *Ber.Rab.* 98:17 which again presents גניסר, but then also, in an obvious citation of *y.Meg.* as candidates. In addition to that, Rabbi Levi *צנברי* and *בית ירה* 1:1 gives to consider: "There is a town in the neighbourhood of Beth Shean called כנרת."⁴⁴ The variety of identifications does not produce a consistent picture and does not allow the conclusion that the Rabbis knew about an actual settlement with the name גניסר. Unlike Leibner I therefore doubt that the mere fact that some Rabbinic passages seem to presuppose the existence of a former settlement called גניסר

⁴² J. Neusner, *The Talmud* 19, p. 11.

⁴³ I. Epstein (ed.), *The Babylonian Talmud Seder Mo'ed*, London 1938, p. 26.

⁴⁴ J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah. The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis, a New American Translation* 3, Atlanta 1985.

without giving its location is sufficient enough to assume that there must have been such a settlement in the past.⁴⁵

In this respect, the continuation of the discussion in *Ber. Rab.* is indeed interesting. Rabbi Berekya is quoted saying:

The entire shore of the Sea of Galilee is called Kinneret. And why is it called Gennesaret? Rabbis said: It means "gardens of princes (גני סרים)." Said R. Judah b. Simon: That is in line with this verse: "And of Naphtali a thousand captains" (1 Chron. 12:35: שרים)

No matter how plausible the popular etymology is, Rabbi Berekya's explanation directly leads us back to the fertile plain called Ginnosar of first century CE Josephus.⁴⁶

(2) Since Γεννησαρέτ is mentioned in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34, one could assume that the toponym appears in one or the other later Christian text. Surprisingly, this is not the case. A settlement named Γεννησαρέτ is neither mentioned in any of the early pilgrim itineraries, nor in Eusebius' *Onomasticon*. Jerome is the first who uses the name, but only for the lake: *Mare autem hic lacum appellat Genesareth, qui Iordane influente efficitur*.⁴⁷ Arculf, too, refers in his report from the year 670 to the *mare Galileae, quod et lacus Cinereth et mare Tiberiadis nominatur*.⁴⁸ There is no trace of a later *Ortstradition*, not even an attempt to connect Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 with a specific place. This somehow counters tendencies in early Christian literature that often enough connected Biblical place names to existing places. Not a single early Christian author did that with reference to Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34! Apparently not even Byzantine scholars, who usually were very interested in local traditions, read Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 as indication of a settlement Γεννησαρέτ.

⁴⁵ Leibner, "Identifying," p. 232.

⁴⁶ Kopp rightly summarizes the results of the Rabbinic attempts of identification with the words: "This uncertainty necessarily leads to the conclusion that in his days no place in the plain of Gennesar bore this name in the living language of the Jews. That once upon a time a town was thus called was no more doubtful to them than, for example, the existence of Rak-kath, whose name already belonged to history" ("Christian Sites," p. 23). J.J. Rousseau/R. Arav, *Jesus and His World. An Archaeological and Cultural Dictionary*, Minneapolis 1995, pp. 109-110, and S.E. Grootker, *Ancient Sites in Galilee. A Toponymic Gazetteer*, Leiden 2000, pp. 252-253, who lists Tel Kinrot as a "Jewish village 70-425 AD," are to be corrected.

⁴⁷ *In Comm Isaías* 3,9,1-2.

⁴⁸ In D. Baldi, *Enchiridion locorum sanctorum. Documenta S. Evangelii loca respicientia*, Jerusalem 1982, pp. 249-250, nr. 341. Beda Venerabilis alludes to this text, cf. *id.*, nr. 342: *Genesar, id est mare Galilaeae*.

The *Description of Palestine* by Epiphanius Monachus Hagiopolita from the ninth century serves as a good example: despite of the text's obvious interest in all sorts of local traditions and localization, it does not know any settlement between Heptapegon and Magdala.⁴⁹ The silence is hardly a result of a lack of information or of incomplete sources, but it rather demonstrates that it did not even occur to the Byzantine itinerarians as a possibility that the toponym refers to an inhabited place at all. In our quest for the identity of Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 the silence of the Byzantine authors in fact speaks louder than the tendency of the Rabbinic texts to at least theoretically discuss the question what geographical features might be behind the toponyms כְּנֶרֶת and גִּיּוֹסָר. Kopp is right when he writes: "The knowledge about the identity of Kinnereth and Gennesar was lost to the Christians."⁵⁰

(3) Only since the Crusader period does a settlement named Gennesaret appear in the literature. Saewulf, the earliest Crusader traveler after the conquest of Jerusalem, reports in the year 1102: *A Tyberiadē civitate est Genesareth castrum, quasi quatuor miliaris ad aquilonem, ubi Dominus piscantibus discipulis aderat, sicut Evangelium testatur.*⁵¹ This short note is significant in several ways. Explicitly distinguishing between the *civitas* Tiberias and the *castrum* Gennesaret, Saewulf indicates that his Gennesaret was equipped with some sort of fortification. He also presents surprisingly exact information about its distance to Tiberias and is keen to see this Gennesaret as the place where Jesus was present when his disciples were fishing according to the testimony of the Gospels. It is clear that he can only refer to Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34. Saewulf in the early twelfth century is therefore the earliest source that offers an unambiguous identification of the toponym Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34 with a clearly defined locality.

Other slightly later texts distinguish *Genesareth* from *Cynereith* that unexpectedly reappears as toponym. In *De situ urbis Jerusalem* from the year 1130 one can read after a reference to *stagnum Geneza-*

⁴⁹ H. Donner, "Die Palästinabeschreibung des Epiphanius Monachus Hagiopolita," *ZDPV* 87 (1971), pp. 42-91, esp. 89.

⁵⁰ Kopp, "Christian Sites," p. 25.

⁵¹ Baldi, *Enchiridion*, p. 262, nr. 370. This text is not mentioned in Kopp, *Die heiligen Stätten*, p. 257; in "Christian Sites," p. 25 he calls *De situ urbis Jerusalem* (1130) the oldest source. Cf. the different interpretation of Saewulf in Leibner, "Identifying," pp. 232-233.

reth: "*Miliario secundo a Genezaret Magdalum, a quo Maria Magdalena (...). Secundo miliario a Magdalo Cynereth civitas, quae est Tiberias.*"⁵² Apparently, *Cynereth* is identified with *Tiberias* and a separate place named *Genezaret* is known to texts from the early twelfth century onwards.

But what was the source of Saewulf's information? The accuracy of his description indeed suggests that he knew the region from own experience. This hypothesis is supported by the similarity of Saewulf's observations to the information we find in a text by the Jewish writer Estori Ha-Farchi from the year 1322: "Eine halbe Stunde östlich von ihm (*scil.* Gennosar) liegt Tanchum (*scil.* Kapernaum), eine halbe Stunde südwärts von Gennesar ist Tiberias."⁵³ Both identifications seem based upon the same local tradition. In contrast to that, the sketchy description in Maimonides⁵⁴ hardly conveys the impression of intimate knowledge of the region. Even Kroll doubts that Maimonides had visited the place during his journey through Palestine. Kroll's insistence that Maimonides knew from "Hörensagen und literarischen Quellen, daß der Ort noch am Leben war,"⁵⁵ is hardly convincing. All Maimonides knows about the location of Gennesaret results from his exegetical expertise, he does not offer anything that goes beyond what he has extracted from his study of Scripture and Jewish tradition.⁵⁶

It seems evident that the sudden reappearance of the place name Gennesaret in Crusader sources is connected to a site whose origin lies in the post-Byzantine period. Looking around in the vicinity of Tell Kinrot for a suitable candidate dating to the period between the latest Byzantine texts and the presence of the Crusaders in the region, one finds only the rectangular fortified complex of Ḥirbet el-Minye.⁵⁷

⁵² In Baldi, *Enchiridion*, p. 263, nr. 371; cf. John of Würzburg in the year 1165 (*id.*, nr. 372) and Theoderich's report from the year 1172 (*id.*, nr. 373).

⁵³ In Kopp, *Die Heiligen Stätten*, p. 256.

⁵⁴ In Kroll, *Auf den Spuren Jesu*, pp. 255-256.

⁵⁵ Kopp, *Die heiligen Stätten*, p. 256.

⁵⁶ Benjamin of Tudela's travel report, first published in 1172/73, only mentions the "Sea of Galilee" (cap. 37), but no site with the same name (in H.P. Rüger, *Syrien und Palästina nach dem Reisebericht des Benjamin von Tudela*, Wiesbaden 1990, p. 55). Given the brevity and religious tendency of Benjamin's report (he is especially interested in places of Jewish tradition and presence) we should not draw any too far-reaching conclusions from it.

⁵⁷ Here cf. Mader, "Die Ausgrabung eines römischen Kastells"; O. Puttrich-Reignard, "Die Palastanlage von Chirbet el-Minje. Ein Vorbericht über die Ergebnisse der im Frühjahr und Herbst 1937 und im Frühjahr 1938 durchgeführten dritten und vierten Grabungskampagne auf

Local inhabitants could have led Saewulf to identify the ruins of Ḥirbet el-Minye with New Testament Γέννησαρέτ. El-Minye was likely constructed under the Umayyad caliph Walīd I. (705-715)⁵⁸ explains why we do not have any earlier Christian or non-Christian text that takes notice of it. If indeed there was a Roman-Byzantine predecessor of Ḥirbet el-Minye or nearby (an option that is unlikely but cannot be totally excluded at the moment), it did not play any role in the identification of the New Testament toponym Γέννησαρέτ.

Chirbet el-Minje bei Tabgha am See Genezareth in Palästina," *HIL* 17-20 (1939), pp. 9-29; A.M. Schneider/O. Puttrich-Reignard, *Ein frühislamischer Bau am See Genesareth. Zwei Berichte über die Grabungen auf Chirbet el-Minje*, Köln 1937; A.M. Schneider, "Ḥirbet el-Minje am See Genezareth," *AAAS* 2 (1952), pp. 23-45; O. Grabar *et al.*, "Sondages à Khirbet el-Minyeh," *IEJ* 10 (1960), pp. 226-243; K.A.S. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture. Umayyads A.D. 622-750* 1.2, Oxford 1969, pp. 388-389. On the exploration of Ḥirbet el-Minye see also Kopp, "Christian Sites" and *id.*, *Die heiligen Stätten*, pp. 253-254. Dalman, *Orte und Wege Jesu*, p. 139 still postulated a much earlier construction date. Apparently, older material was found below Ḥirbet el-Minye during excavations: "Daß sich unter dem Kastellniveau noch eine weitere Besiedlungsschicht befindet, geht aus den Scherbenfunden hervor, die in mehreren Tiefschnitten zutage getreten sind, und sich von den, in den darüberliegenden Schichten gefundenen, wesentlich unterscheiden" (Schneider/Puttrich-Reignard, *Ein frühislamischer Bau*, p. 32; cf. Schneider, "Ḥirbet el-Minje," p. 25). As the material has never been published, all conclusions on its character and date remain speculative, even more so since certain early Islamic ware has often been addressed as "Roman" or "Byzantine" in older research. The possibility of an earlier settlement under Ḥirbet el-Minye cannot be entirely excluded, however. Very little is known about Ḥan el-Minye (2005/2527), a way station on the official post route from Damascus to Kairo and located only 200 m north of Ḥirbet el-Minye. Built around 1440 by Sultan *Jagmaq*, the building went out of use in the early twentieth century, cf. Kroll, *Auf den Spuren Jesu*, pp. 211-212; Grabar *et al.*, "Sondages," pp. 240-243; Y. Stepanski, "Ḥanot Minnim (Khan Minya)," *ESI* 7-8 (1988-1989), pp. 73-75. One of the earliest attestations is the itinerary of Sultan Kā'itbāj from the year 882/1477 (cf. R. Hartmann, "Die Straße von Damascus nach Kairo," *ZDMG* 64 [1910], pp. 665-702, esp. 694f-695). J.L. Burckhardt has visited the place in 1812. At the beginning of the twentieth century Dalman reports that the traces of the Ḥan "jetzt fast völlig verschwunden sind, weil seine Steine zum Straßenbau verwandt wurden" (*Orte und Wege Jesu*, pp. 139-140). One might add that a cave in area C on Tell el-'Orēme was inhabited in the Mameluk period.

⁵⁸ Cf. the inscription in Schneider, "Ḥirbet el-Minje," p. 29; with more detail E. Kühnel in Puttrich-Reignard, "Die Palastanlage," pp. 13-14. It is debated if the inscription refers to the construction (thus Kühnel; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, pp. 388-389) or merely the alteration of an older, Byzantine (?) building by Walīd I (so Schneider, "Ḥirbet el-Minje," pp. 40-45; cautious Grabar *et al.*, "Sondages," pp. 240-241. R. Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule. A Historical and Archaeological Study*, Princeton 1995, p. 374 bases his Umayyad date on the existence of a mihrāb in the mosque: "This Umayyad palace has a mosque with an mihrāb, and so dates after 86-90/707-709." See now the report by F. Bloch, "Ḥirbat al-Minya: Die unglasierte Keramik," in: F. Bloch/V. Daiber/P. Knötzle, *Studien zur spätantiken und islamischen Keramik. Hirbat al-Minya, Baalbek, Resafa, Rahden* 2006, pp. 1-109.

At the time of the Crusaders, however, the remains of Ḥirbet el-Minye were substantial and significant enough to warrant a discussion in Christian and Jewish circles about its identity and former role. Above that, medieval Muslim writers mention a place named Munyāt Hisām or El-Munya ("the harbour"), which was certainly not far from Ḥirbet el-Minye.⁵⁹ It is therefore conceivable that when the Crusaders first saw Ḥirbet el-Minye and the neighboring village north of Tiberias (*ad aquilonem*) they were more than prepared to identify them with the remains of Γεννησαρέτ of Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34. The Crusaders were thus able to connect an "unnamed" place with an "unused" New Testament toponym. Christian trade and pilgrimage that took place only a few yards away on the road along Tell Kinrot⁶⁰ has certainly contributed to the desire to know and be able to show the place *ubi Dominus piscantibus discipulis aderat*, as Saewulf has put it. Given the rather good state of preservation of Ḥirbet el-Minye in the twelfth century (judged from later pictures) even the term *castrum* does not seem unappropriate,⁶¹ although the distance *a Tyberiade ... quasi quatuor miliaris* might be a little too short. The silence of all earlier literature about Γεννησαρέτ was apparently not perceived as a problem.⁶²

⁵⁹ Schneider "Ḥirbet el-Minje," p. 25. The latest attestation of the site dates to around 1430, die latest datable pottery from Ḥirbet el-Minye belongs to the twelfth to fourteenth century (cf. also Schneider/Puttrich-Reignard, *Ein frühislamischer Bau*, pp. 32-33). Schneider, "Ḥirbet el-Minje," p. 29 assumes that the village might have been destroyed by Timur Lenk's Mongols or even more likely through an earthquake. Afterwards, the site was only sporadically settled, its function was now fulfilled through the Ḥan which most likely was no isolated building, but surrounded by a couple of huts. On el-Minje in Arabic literature cf. Christie, "Tell Hum," pp. 28-29; Mader, "Die Ausgrabung eines römischen Kastells," pp. 216-217.

⁶⁰ On the course of the road between Tiberias and the Jordan crossing east of Capernaum cf. Hartmann, "Die Straße"; Z. Ilan, "Eastern Galilee. Survey of Roman Roads," *ESI* 9 (1989-1990), pp. 14-16. Thanks to the unusually low water level in September and October 1990 it was possible to observe many different structures of undetermined age along the shores of the Sea of Galilee near Karei Deshe and Tell el-'Orème, among them "an ancient wall (...) which runs along the base of the cliff and which may be a retaining wall for an ancient north-south road," see Y. Stepanski, "Kefar Nahum Map. Survey," *ESI* 10 (1991), pp. 87-90.

⁶¹ Cf. a similar statement by the Arabic writer Ḥalīl ez-Zāhiri in the early 15th c., cf. Mader, "Die Ausgrabung eines römischen Kastells," p. 216.

⁶² Interestingly, since about 1300 various maps record the site of Betsaida west of the Jordan (and not east as today) about in the region of Tell el-'Orème (cf. Z. Vilnay, *The Holy Land in Old Prints and Maps*, Jerusalem 1963, pp. 176-177) and where Saewulf and other mediaeval authors localize Ginnosar. Despite conflicting localizations the procedure remains the same: an existing site is connected with a name known from the Bible but still unlocalized.

Conclusion

A number of conclusions about the localization of the New Testament toponym Γεννησαρέτ and the character of Tell el-^cOrēme and its surroundings in Hellenistic and Roman times can be drawn from the evidence:

(1) Before the Crusader period we do not have evidence that the toponym Γεννησαρέτ referred to a concrete settlement, it was only used for the Lake and the plain el-Ġuwēr west of it.⁶³ The Bronze- and Iron Age city on Tell el-^cOrēme had no direct successor keeping the name that might have moved downhill or elsewhere into the plain. The toponym Γεννησαρέτ in Mark 6:53; Matt. 14:34, therefore, does not refer to an individual settlement, but the “fruchtbare Ebene am Westufer des Sees nördlich von Magdala.”⁶⁴ The identification of Γεννησαρέτ with el-Minye on the foot of the Tell by the Crusaders is a clear anachronism based on exegetical and theological interests. Therefore, any attempt to identify a settlement Γεννησαρέτ in the pre-Crusader period should be given up.

(2) Instead of a single identifiable site, the examination of the ancient literature has produced a complex picture of a region exten-

These old traditions have lead to considerable confusion with regard to the localization of Bethsaida in nineteenth and early twentieth century literature.

⁶³ If such a radical solution is accepted, one avoids inconsistencies like in Kopp, *Die heiligen Stätten*, p. 257 who writes: “Durch die Straßen von Gennesar ging wieder und wieder der Schritt Jesu. Aber die Evangelien berichten nichts Konkretes über sein Wirken. So fehlte den Christen der Anreiz, hier ein Heiligtum zu bauen. Darum ist der Ort in den spärlichen Schriften vor den Kreuzfahrern nicht erwähnt. Dann stößt man aber doch auf eine so starke Tradition, daß sie ein Echo aus alter Zeit sein muß.” Dalman’s view that Gennesaret in Mark 6:3parr is an identifiable site (*Orte und Wege Jesu*, pp. 138-141) also needs to be revised.

⁶⁴ Thus U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (Mt 8-17)*, Neukirchen-Vluyn u.a. 1990, p. 413; W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, Berlin ⁵1981, p. 369 n. 17. J. Gnllka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus (Mk 1-8,26)*, Neukirchen-Vluyn u.a. 1978, p. 272 rather prefers to see “das zur Zeit Jesu dicht bevölkerte Nordende des Seewestufers” mentioned than the entire plain (with reference to Dalman, *Orte und Wege Jesu*, p. 133). Differently B. Pixner, *Wege des Messias und Stätten der Urkirche. Jesus und das Judentum im Licht neuer archäologische Erkenntnisse*, Gießen/Basel 1991, p. 81: “Oben auf dem Tell lag die alttestamentliche Stadt Kinnereth an der Grenze des Stammes Naphtali (Jos 19,35), während sich das neutestamentliche Genezareth (Mt 14,34/Mk 6,53) in der Ebene auf dem Tell Hunud nahe der starke Quelle von et-Tine befand. (...) Ein kleines römisches Straßenkastell (Chirbet el Chan) ist am Ostfuß des Tell el-^cOreime in der Nähe der heutigen israelischen Pumpstation (...) gefunden worden.” Nevertheless, neither for the localization of Gennesaret on Tell Hunud (contrary to Fritz, “Kinneret und Ginnosar,” p. 44) nor for the existence of a Roman “Straßenkastell” at Ĥirbet el-Minye do we have sufficient evidence.

sively used for agriculture over several centuries. Natural resources like mild climate, several perennial springs and the extraordinary fertility of the soil allowed the cultivation of a wide variety of crops like grain, fruit and other highly prized produce, which were attractive for the inhabitants of the region as well as for traders and townspeople from neighboring areas. Agriculture in the plain of Ginnosar, besides fishing, contributed extensively to the growing prosperity of the region around the Lake in Hellenistic and Roman times. The scope of archaeological exploration must, therefore, be widened from the quest for a single settlement towards an integrative approach to the spatial, economical and social structure of the whole region on the northwestern shore of the Lake of Galilee including its connections to neighboring regions.⁶⁵ Leibner's invaluable dissertation provides a firm basis for exploring the historical landscape of the late Hellenistic to Byzantine Ginnosar plain.⁶⁶ Additional natural-scientific exploration is needed to gain a better picture about the natural environment of the region 2000 years ago.

(3) Due to the lack of sufficient palaeoclimatological and paleobotanical data, it is still difficult to reconstruct the exact procedures and methods of agricultural activity in the Ginnosar plain. No other structures apart from the Hellenistic farmstead on Tell el-^cOrēme have been examined to gain a clearer picture about settlement patterns and infrastructure during the post-Iron Age periods⁶⁷. The rest of our evidence comes from surveys or texts. The fact that huts and sheds for storage of tools are mentioned with respect to Ginnosar in *m.Maas.* 3:7 follows usual agricultural habits. One can assume that irrigation channels criss-crossed the fertile plain and directed water from Naḥal ^cAmūd (Wādī ^cAmūd), Naḥal Zalmōn (Wādī er-Rabaḍīye, Wādī Sellāme) and Naḥal Arbēl (Wādī Ḥamām) in the west to the orchards. It can also be expected that a network of paths and tracks connected individual plantations with the settlements. But so far we have little evidence on the ground to confirm that idealistic picture. Was the plain in the Hellenistic and Roman periods covered with similar farmsteads like the one discovered on Tel Kinrot? Were

⁶⁵ Cf. Grabar *et al.*, "Sondages," p. 240.

⁶⁶ U. Leibner, *History of Settlement*.

⁶⁷ Due to the lack of supporting evidence the villa and watch tower postulated by R. Köppel, "Der Tell el-Oreme und die Ebene Genesareth. Vorbereitende Untersuchungen zu einer Grabung," *Bib* 13 (1932), pp. 298-308, esp. 303-304 have to remain speculative.

there even small hamlets or villages in the fertile alluvial belt on the lake or did they only exist in the foothills on the margin of the plain to preserve valuable agrarian land from being destroyed through building activities? It is likely that the plain played a role as bread basket for the flanking towns of Magdala and Tiberias, but no scientific data has been collected so far that can help define its precise character. Were there harbors along the shore line and where were they located? How were they connected to the local road system and settlements?⁶⁸

In the late Hellenistic and early Roman to Byzantine periods Tell el-^cOrēme was integrated into the regional system of agriculture, but not as location for a settlement.⁶⁹ It is conceivable that the slope was used for fields or the cultivation of fruit or olive trees. Scattered ceramics at least indicate that the Tell was not entirely abandoned. Due to substantial erosion, no clear evidence of terracing or other supporting features dating to the Hellenistic and Roman periods was found, however. Did farmers use existing building terraces from the Iron Age? It may also be that the hill was covered with grass and used as pasture. Here, too, hard data are necessary from sediment analysis.

Although I disagree with Leibner about the identification of Ġu-wēr Abū Shūshē with Γεννησαρét (Abū Shūshē's ancient name is still unknown in my opinion), we both concur that Mark actually had the plain and not a settlement in mind when he spoke of Γεννησαρét. Could Mark have known about such terminological and topo-

⁶⁸ When the water level is low remains of stone structures can be seen even today. They have usually been interpreted as quai or harbour, cf. already Christie, "Tell Hum," p. 15: "At times when the water of the lake sinks to its lowest level, the remains of old harbour works can be seen." See also M. Nun, *Ancient Anchorages and Harbours around the Sea of Galilee*, Kibbutz Ein Gev 1988, p. 23; *id.* "Ports of Galilee. Modern Drought Reveals Harbors from Jesus' Time," *BAR* 25.4 (1999), pp. 18-31, 64; Stepanski, "Kefar Nahum," p. 90. Dalman, *Orte und Wege Jesu*, p. 139 mentions a harbour, too, but assigns it to a *site* named Ginnosar that he identifies with the one mentioned in the NT. The lack of relevant data makes dating the remains difficult. Another similar structures along the shore of the Ginnosar plain existed in Magdala (see J. Zangenberg, *Magdala am See Gennesaret. Überlegungen zur sogenannten "mini-sinagoga" und einige andere Beobachtungen zum kulturellen Profil des Ortes in neutestamentlicher Zeit*, Waltrop 2001); cf. K. Seybold, "Dalmanutha (Mk 8,10)," *ZDPV* 116 (2000), pp. 42-48.

⁶⁹ The Hellenistic farmstead was not further used in the Roman period, no continuous occupation is visible. Therefore, Köppel goes somewhat too far when he says: "Jedenfalls ist der 'Orēme ein Beispiel römischer landwirtschaftlicher Arbeit grosszügigster Art'" ("Der Tell el-Orēme," p. 304).

graphical differences, was he aware of the details? It is all a matter of the quality of Mark's sources—a question we do not want to engage here. Does it—above all—make a difference? Given how little detail most ancient authors (apart from Josephus) actually knew about the Galilee,⁷⁰ it almost seems a miracle that he mentions Γεννησαρέτ at all and integrates it into his plot. Much clearer than the sources of this information is the narrative function Mark assigned to the area called Γεννησαρέτ. It provides the stage for miracles and one of the longest disputes about a central issue of Jewish halakha and early Christian behavior Mark offers in his Gospel. To me, this seems reason enough to continue exploring the passage.

⁷⁰ See Cappelletti, "Non-Jewish Authors on Galilee."

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